



BRAD LITTLE
GOVERNOR

April 4, 2023

The Honorable Mike Moyle
Speaker of the House
Idaho Legislature
Boise, ID 83720

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Dear Mr. Speaker,

I hereby advise you that I have transmitted to the Office of the Secretary of State, with my approval, the following House Bill, to wit:

H 348

within the time prescribed by law, the same having arrived in the Office of the Governor at the hour of 10:35 a.m. on March 30, 2023.

Over the last two years attorney wages at the Office of the State Appellate Public Defender and the Office of the Attorney General have risen a staggering 18.5%. This is a rate of wage increase that far outpaces what other state employees have received. Likewise, Idaho taxpayers, who must pay for these increases, have also not seen wage increases this generous.

However, what concerns me more than the increase is that our judicial salaries continue to fall behind. We have known for years that Idaho ranks at the bottom—49th according to the National Center for State Courts—in judicial salaries at every level compared to other states. More troubling is that attorney positions in state and local government are quickly outpacing judicial salaries. This could have serious consequences for recruiting judicial candidates to serve on the bench.

I believe we should want to attract the best attorneys from both the public sector and the private sector to serve on the bench as a capstone of their legal career. Furthermore, beginning in FY25, the state will have even more attorneys in its employ when the State Public Defender Act takes effect. As the state plays a greater role in establishing the public sector attorney wage in the future, my hope is attorney wages are considered holistically with judicial salaries so that they move together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brad Little".

Brad Little
Governor of Idaho

Cc: Secretary of State Phil McGrane