



BRAD LITTLE
GOVERNOR

April 10, 2026

The Honorable Phil McGrane
Secretary of State
Idaho Statehouse
Hand Delivered

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I hereby file with you HOUSE BILL 978 relating to certain appropriations of public funds. Be advised that I have both signed and line-item vetoed HOUSE BILL 978 pursuant to the express authority granted to me by Article 4, Section 11 of the Idaho Constitution to disapprove of appropriations by way of line-item veto. Specifically, I disapproved and line-item vetoed the following distinct appropriation items, set forth in section 3, lines 31, 33, 35, and 36, to wit:

19 SECTION 3. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary,
20 the appropriation made to the Department of Health and Welfare for the Public
21 Health Services Division for the Health Care Policy Initiatives Program is
22 hereby reduced by the following amounts according to the designated expense
23 classes from the listed funds for the period July 1, 2026, through June 30,
24 2027.

		FCR	FCR	FCR	
	FOR	PERSONNEL	OPERATING	TRUSTEE AND	
	COSTS	EXPENDITURES	BENEFIT	PAYMENTS	TOTAL
25					
26					
27					
28					
29	FROM:				
30	Cooperative Welfare (General)				
31	Fund		\$16,300	\$123,800	\$140,100
32	Cooperative Welfare (Dedicated)				
33	Fund	\$3,200	75,000		78,200
34	Cooperative Welfare (Federal)				
35	Fund	0	16,500	237,800	254,300
36	TOTAL	\$3,200	\$107,800	\$367,600	\$478,600

Idaho is facing one of the most severe physician shortages in the nation for a variety of reasons. Our graduate medical education (GME) program has proven to be one of the most effective tools in addressing this challenge, and I have consistently recommended — and the Legislature has supported — investing additional resources to strengthen and expand our physician pipeline.

However, the reduction in this appropriation would force the Department of Health and Welfare to make drastic program cuts with virtually no warning. Funding to support eight current medical residents would be stripped in the middle of their committed three-year medical residency. This disruption in funding is extremely problematic. It is not only unjust to the physicians in training and the residency programs we have spent years developing, but it also undermines Idaho's credibility, signaling that the state may not honor its commitments.

Our GME program boasts one of the highest retention rates in the country, and its affordability makes it one of the most cost-effective investments in Idaho's future. We must stay committed to expanding and strengthening initiatives like this, rather than undermining them by cutting funding. Doing so not only jeopardizes the pipeline of physicians we rely on to care for our communities but also sends a troubling message about Idaho's reliability and commitment to its future healthcare workforce.

All remaining parts of HOUSE BILL 978, having not been line-item vetoed as set forth above and in the attached HOUSE BILL 978, have my approval.

My signing of HOUSE BILL 978 occurred on April 10, 2026, within the time prescribed by law, the same having arrived in the Office of the Governor at the hour of 6:06 p.m. on April 2, 2026, and the Legislature having adjourned sine die on at the hour of 6:18 p.m. on April 2, 2026.

Sincerely,



Brad Little
Governor of Idaho