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~~Platform Proposal 2026-01~~ (*Withdrawn 6/15/26*)

Title: Regarding the makeup of the State Board of Education

Submitted by: Austin Smith, Legislative District 18

To be presented by: Austin Smith, Legislative District 18

Amend the platform by striking Article III, Section 12:

Article III

~~Section 12: We believe in accountability for those who are making decisions about the public education and higher education system in Idaho and therefore support the direct election of the members of the Idaho State Board of Education on a regional basis thereby providing each of Idaho a voice.~~

~~Platform Proposal 2026-02 (Withdrawn 6/15/26)~~

Regarding the Redistricting Commission

Submitted by: Austin Smith, Legislative District 18

To be presented by: Austin Smith, Legislative District 18

Amend the platform by striking Article I, Section 5, Subsection F and replacing it with new text which says:

ARTICLE I. RESPONSIBILITY IN GOVERNMENT

Section 5. State Legislature

F. Whenever there is reason to reapportion the legislature or to provide for new congressional district boundaries in the state, or both, because of a new federal census or because of a decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, a commission for reapportionment shall be formed on order of the secretary of state. The commission shall be composed of seven members to be appointed as follows:

a. The leaders of the two largest political parties of each house of the legislature shall each designate one member;

b. The state chairmen of the two largest political parties, determined by the vote cast for governor in the last gubernatorial election, shall each designate one member;

c. The Governor of the State of Idaho shall designate one member;

e. In the event any appointing authority does not select the members within fifteen calendar days following the secretary of state's order to form the commission, such members shall be appointed by the Supreme Court. No member of the commission may be an elected or appointed official in the state of Idaho at the time of designation or selection, nor have been an elected or appointed official 30 days prior to the time of designation or selection;

~~F. We support amending the Idaho Constitution, Article III, § 2 as follows: Strike paragraph (2) and amend as follows:~~

~~Whenever there is reason to reapportion the legislature or to provide for new congressional district boundaries in the state, or both, because of a new federal census or because of a decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, a commission for reapportionment shall be formed on order of the secretary of state. The commission shall be composed of six members to be appointed as follows:~~

~~a. The leaders of the two largest political parties of each house of the legislature shall each designate one member;~~

~~b. The state chairmen of the two largest political parties, determined by the vote cast for governor in the last gubernatorial election, shall each designate one member;~~

- ~~e. However, for a political party to be eligible to appoint members to the commission as provided in subparagraphs (a) and (b) the political party must satisfy at least one of the following requirements:
 - ~~i. Average of at least twenty two percent of all the ballots cast in four of the previous primary elections~~
 - ~~ii. Elected at least two constitutional officers in the preceding ten years~~~~
- ~~d. In the event only one political party satisfies a requirement to be eligible to appoint members to the commission the remaining three members shall be appointed by the eligible political party's state central committee;~~
- ~~e. In the event any appointing authority does not select the members within fifteen calendar days following the secretary of state's order to form the commission, such members shall be appointed by the Supreme Court. No member of the commission may be an elected or appointed official in the state of Idaho at the time of designation or selection;~~

Platform Proposal 2026-03

Title: Gun Rights

Submitted by: Colton Bennett, Latah County

To be presented by: Colton Bennett, Latah County

Amend the platform as follows:

Section 1: Gun Rights

A. We support the right of the individual to keep and bear arms, as guaranteed by the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, ~~and article one section eleven of the Idaho State Constitution.~~ We believe Article One, Section Eleven, of the Idaho State Constitution should be strengthened to provide at least the same, and preferably greater, protections than those contained in the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

B. We commend efforts of organizations to preserve and foster that right, including Right-to-Carry laws.

C. We believe the federal government should not regulate intrastate ammunition and firearms sales.

D. We believe in protection of the American firearms industry against harassing lawsuits that blame them for the acts of criminals.

E. We call for more enforcement of ~~current~~ just laws against violent criminals, not more “gun control” aimed at law-abiding citizens.

F. We strongly oppose the United States entering into any international agreements or treaties which would undermine, limit, or interfere with the individual right to own and bear arms and ammunition.

G. ~~We find that the Congress violated the 2nd Amendment's protections in with the passage of the 1986 Firearms' Owners Protection Act when the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) interpreted the Hughes Amendment as a prohibition on the civilian possession of any fully automatic firearm manufactured after May 19, 1986.~~ We support the repeal of the 1986 Firearms' Owners Protection Act and the abolition of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms.

Platform Proposal 2026-04

Title: In Support of the 17th Amendment

Submitted by: Michael Colson, Bonneville County

To be presented by: Michael Colson, Bonneville County

Recommended change is to revise Article I. RESPONSIBILITY IN GOVERNMENT, Section 3. Reform of Congress, Sub-Section C. with language consistent with Republican principles.

Arguments in favor of this change:

1. Repealing the 17th Amendment Would Reduce the Voice of Idaho Voters

The 17th Amendment gives Idaho citizens the direct right to elect their U.S. Senators. Repealing it would transfer that power from millions of voters nationwide—and hundreds of thousands of Idaho voters—to 105 state legislators.

Republicans generally support expanding citizen participation in elections and limiting the concentration of political power. Direct election of senators ensures accountability to the people rather than to a small group of political insiders. The Republican Party should trust Idaho voters to choose their senators directly.

2. State Sovereignty Is Protected Through Other Constitutional Mechanisms

The states already retain significant constitutional protections:

- *Equal representation in the U.S. Senate regardless of population.*
- *The Electoral College.*
- *The Tenth Amendment.*
- *State control over elections.*
- *The ability to challenge federal actions in court.*
- *Significant authority over education, public safety, and many domestic policies.*

Repealing the 17th Amendment is not necessary to preserve state sovereignty.

Proposed point: State sovereignty can be defended without taking away voters' right to elect senators.

3. Legislative Selection Could Increase Political Corruption

Before the 17th Amendment was ratified in 1913, state legislatures frequently experienced:

- *Deadlocks in selecting senators.*
- *Allegations of bribery.*
- *Backroom deals.*
- *Vacant Senate seats that left states underrepresented.*

The amendment was adopted in part because the previous system had become vulnerable to political manipulation.

Restoring legislative selection risks reviving problems that Republicans have long criticized—insider politics and lack of transparency.

Therefore, the platform shall be amended as follows:

ARTICLE I. RESPONSIBILITY IN GOVERNMENT

Section 3. Reform of Congress

~~C. We support restoration of the constitution's checks and balances that protects the rights and sovereignty of the states by repealing the 17th amendment.~~

We support restoration of constitutional limits on federal power and protection of the rights and sovereignty of the states through vigorous enforcement of the Tenth Amendment, greater state authority over domestic policy, and reforms that increase accountability of federal officials to the people and the states.

Platform Proposal 2026-05

Title: Regarding Education

Submitted by: Colton Bennett, Latah County

To be presented by: Colton Bennett, Latah County

Amend the platform as follows:

ARTICLE III. EDUCATION

The Idaho Republican Party recognizes that the future of this great state lies with our faith and reliance on God our Creator, who has uniquely entrusted the primary responsibility for the education and upbringing of children to their parents. ~~in our strong efforts to uphold family values, and in the quality of education provided for its citizens.~~ We believe that the State's role in education must be strictly supportive, not leading, respecting the family as the foundational authority. Because the most effective and responsive educational system is that which remains closest to the people, the individual and the family must be the primary drivers of all educational decisions, with the community providing assistance only as directed by and in support of the parents. ~~successful education is a joint responsibility of the individual, the family, and the community. As with government in general, we believe the most effective, responsible and responsive educational system is that system closest to the people.~~

Platform Proposal 2026-06

Title: Regarding the Right to Life

Submitted by: Jenny Holmes, Kootenai County

To be presented by: Jenny Holmes, Kootenai County

Amend the platform as follows:

ARTICLE XIV. AMERICAN FAMILY

Section 3: Right to Life

A. We affirm that human personhood begins at the moment of fertilization ~~conception~~ and ought to be protected and cherished from that moment on. We affirm that the intentional taking of human life through the act of abortion is murder. All children should be protected regardless of the circumstances of conception, including persons conceived in rape and incest. The federal judiciary played the tyrant in dozens of Supreme Court pro-abortion opinions since Roe v. Wade up to the Dobbs decision, and Idaho has the sovereign authority to defy the federal judiciary should they once again propose the fiction that abortion is a federal constitutional right. We support the criminalization of all murders by abortion within the state's jurisdiction. We also support strengthening the Idaho Constitution's declaration of the right to life for preborn children.

B. We reaffirm our support for the sanctity of life from fertilization ~~conception~~ to natural death, and for the rights of the unborn child. We oppose abortion based on sex selection, convenience, or as a method of birth control.

Platform Proposal 2026-07

Title: Regarding Higher Education and Right to Life

Submitted by: Bryce Rich, Bannock County

To be presented by: Bryce Rich, Bannock County

Amend the platform as follows:

ARTICLE III. EDUCATION

Section 5: ~~We support efforts to improve our public school system, including introducing market forces to our school system and providing our public school system and its leaders with ample discretion in hiring decisions and how to best spend the funds provided to it by taxpayers to meet local needs. We also recognize that more government spending does not necessarily generate improved schools.~~ We strongly support professional technical education, continuing education, and higher education programs that provide career readiness, workforce development, research, innovation, and college preparation. We support responsible taxpayer investment in Idaho's colleges, universities, and career technical institutions, recognizing their vital role in preparing citizens for productive employment, strengthening Idaho's economy, advancing research, and preserving educational opportunity. Public funding should be administered with accountability, transparency, and measurable outcomes.

Section 6: We strongly support professional technical and continuing education programs that provide career readiness and college preparation, ~~but do not support using taxpayer funding for programs beyond high school.~~

ARTICLE XII: Economy

Section 3: Labor

- A. We believe that both the employer and employee share a joint responsibility for maintaining a safe work environment without excessive regulation.
- B. We support education and professional technical education to develop a well-trained workforce, ~~but do not support funding education with taxpayer money beyond high school.~~ We support education, professional technical education, and higher education as essential components of developing a well-trained workforce. We support responsible public investment in post-secondary education while encouraging efficiency, accountability, affordability, and alignment with Idaho's workforce and economic needs.

ARTICLE XIV: AMERICAN FAMILY

Section 3: Right to Life

- A. ~~We affirm that human personhood begins at the moment of conception and ought to be protected and cherished from that moment on. We affirm that the intentional taking of human life through the act of abortion is murder. All children should be protected regardless of the circumstances of conception, including persons conceived in rape and incest.~~ We affirm the sanctity of human life and support legal protections for unborn children. We support exceptions in cases of rape, incest, and when a physician determines that continuation of the pregnancy poses a serious threat to the life of the mother. We encourage policies that support women, children, families, adoption services, and access to healthcare resources so that both mother and child are treated with dignity and compassion.

Platform Proposal 2026-08

Title: Bond or Levy Failure

Submitted by: Branden Durst, Legislative District 11

To be presented by: Branden Durst, Legislative District 11

Amend the platform by adding the following:

ARTICLE I. RESPONSIBILITY IN GOVERNMENT

Section 2: Taxation

J. We support requiring that any school district or other taxing district whose levy or bond measure fails at election must wait a minimum of eighteen (18) months before resubmitting any levy or bond measure to voters, and that any such resubmission may not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the dollar value of the measure that was rejected.

Platform Proposal 2026-09

Title: Property Tax Elimination

Submitted by: Arlene Herndon, Bonner County, and John Slagboom, Latah County

To be presented by: Arlene Herndon, Bonner County

OVERVIEW

The current Idaho Republican Party Platform endorses property taxes as a permanent part of Idaho's tax structure and calls only for their "reduction whenever possible." This language is inconsistent with the growing consensus among Idaho Republicans that property taxes should be eliminated, not merely reduced. These amendments would align the platform with the principle that no Idahoan should face the loss of their home through property taxation. Three sections of the platform are amended below as a single, unified proposal.

Amend the platform as follows:

ARTICLE I. RESPONSIBILITY IN GOVERNMENT

Section 2: Taxation

C. We believe Idaho's tax structure should be predictable, fair, and balanced; ~~and that the combination of our income, sales, and property taxes will continue to provide a stable, dependable source of income for governmental needs.~~ Property tax is an inherently unjust tax that converts privately owned property into government collateral and threatens homeownership. We support the elimination of property taxes in Idaho and their replacement with revenue sources that do not place a lien on a citizen's home.

RATIONALE:

The current plank endorses property taxes as a permanent feature of Idaho's tax structure. Idaho homeowners paid \$2.174 billion in property taxes in 2025 despite \$328 million in state-funded relief. The property tax burden continues to grow regardless of relief efforts. Property tax is the only tax in Idaho that can result in the loss of a citizen's home. The platform should reflect the Republican principle that government should not have the power to take a person's home through taxation.

Section 5. State Legislature

C. We support reduction of Idaho's income tax rates, ~~and encourage a reduction in property taxes whenever possible.~~ and the elimination of property taxes. We call on the Idaho Legislature to develop and implement a plan to fully replace property tax revenue with alternative funding sources that do not threaten homeownership.

RATIONALE:

The current plank calls only for "reduction" of property taxes "whenever possible," language that has produced no meaningful results for Idaho homeowners. Over the last six years, Idaho grew state spending above inflation and population growth by \$1.2 billion. Had that excess spending been directed to local taxing districts, half of property tax bills would now be paid by the state. The revenue to replace property taxes exists. The platform should call for elimination, not merely reduction.

ARTICLE IX. PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

The Republican Party believes in the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution: "No person shall be ... deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation." We oppose any federal, state or local regulation that would diminish a property owner's right to develop his property.

We believe property tax is incompatible with true private property ownership. A tax that allows the government to place a lien on and ultimately seize a citizen's home for nonpayment is fundamentally at odds with the right to own property. No Idahoan should face the loss of their home because they cannot keep up with a government assessment of what their property might sell for. We support the elimination of property taxes to protect the private property rights of all Idahoans.

RATIONALE:

The current Article IX addresses government regulation and eminent domain but is silent on the threat that property taxation poses to private property rights. Property tax is the only tax in Idaho that places a lien on a citizen's home and can result in its seizure. Seniors on fixed incomes, young families, and multi-generational ranchers all face the risk of losing their homes when assessed values rise faster than their ability to pay. This amendment connects the party's existing commitment to private property rights with the practical reality that property taxation undermines those rights.

SUMMARY

These three amendments together would align the Idaho Republican Party Platform with the principle that property tax elimination, not merely reduction or relief, is the goal. They would: (1) remove the current endorsement of property taxes as a permanent revenue source; (2) replace the weak call for "reduction whenever possible" with a clear call for elimination and a legislative plan; and (3) connect property tax elimination to the party's existing commitment to private property rights.

Governor DeSantis has called a special session in Florida to eliminate property taxes on homesteads. Idaho should be leading this fight, not following. These platform amendments would put the Idaho Republican Party on record in support of that goal.

Platform Proposal 2026-10

Title: Educational Accreditation

Submitted by: Branden Durst, Legislative District 11

To be presented by: Branden Durst, Legislative District 11

Amend the platform by adding the following:

ARTICLE III. EDUCATION

Section 13: We support amending Idaho Code to sever the State of Idaho's affiliation with any accrediting body — at the K–12 or post-secondary level — that promotes ideological agendas antithetical to the values and principles of the Idaho Republican Party Platform, including but not limited to social justice indoctrination, diversity, equity and inclusion frameworks, or progressive gender ideology. We further support Idaho's recognition of alternative accrediting bodies that affirm traditional academic standards, parental rights, and the values of Idaho families, ensuring that Idaho institutions are not coerced into adopting ideological requirements as a condition of accreditation.

Platform Proposal 2026-11

Title: Medical School

Submitted by: Cheri Durst, Legislative District 11

To be presented by: Cheri Durst, Legislative District 11

Amend the platform by adding the following:

ARTICLE III. EDUCATION

Section 14: We support the expansion of medical education capacity in Idaho through the acquisition of an existing medical education institution or the creation of a new Idaho-based medical school, in order to reduce the state's dependence on out-of-state programs and increase the pipeline of physicians and medical professionals serving Idaho communities. We further support terminating any existing partnership, affiliation, or contract with medical education entities that promote abortion as an acceptable medical practice, and require that any future medical education partnerships entered into by the State of Idaho be with institutions whose curriculum and clinical training are consistent with the sanctity of human life from conception. We additionally support expanding access to midwifery education in Idaho to ensure that pregnant women and families have access to safe, skilled birth care across the state.

Platform Proposal 2026-12

Title: Levels of Sovereignty

Submitted by: Barbara Ehardt, Legislative District 33

To be presented by: Barbara Ehardt, Legislative District 33

Amend the preamble to the platform as follows:

~~We believe the most effective, responsible, responsive government is government closest to the people, and the sovereignty of the state must be protected. That government is best that governs least.~~ We believe, as our Founders did, that the government is best that governs least, and that the most effective, responsible, and responsive government is the government closest to the people. Our Founders recognized the individual and the family unit as the most basic unit of government. After the individual and family unit, the Founders recognized that the government closest to the people was and should be the State.

Platform Proposal 2026-13

Title: Full Platform Refresh

Submitted by: Brian Almon, Ada County

To be presented by: Brian Almon, Ada County

Explanation: *Over the years, the Idaho GOP Platform has grown substantially, while increasingly being used as a litmus test for Republican candidates, party officers, precinct committeemen, and volunteers. I believe the purpose of a platform is to provide a high-level statement of the principles upon which we agree, along with a more limited set of priorities for the immediate future.*

This revision takes the principles inherent in the existing platform and codifies them in the preamble, creating a document intended to unite Republicans around shared beliefs while allowing room for reasonable differences on specific policy questions.

The purpose of this revision is not to change what Idaho Republicans believe, but to express those beliefs through a concise statement of enduring principles rather than an extensive list of specific policy prescriptions.

Strike the entirety of the Idaho GOP Platform replace with the following:

WE ARE REPUBLICANS BECAUSE:

We believe the strength of our nation and of our state rests on faith in God our Creator, the dignity, freedom, and responsibility of the individual, and the family as the first institution of ordered liberty.

We believe human life is sacred from conception to natural death, that the traditional family founded upon the union of one man and one woman is the basic unit of society, and that religious liberty and freedom of conscience are among the first rights of a free people.

We believe we are inheritors of a distinct Western Civilization, and that our traditional culture safeguards our identity as a free people.

We believe that America is a unique nation founded upon enduring truths and that the United States Constitution and its republican form of government are the greatest guarantors of liberty in human history.

We believe in equal rights, equal justice, and equal opportunity for all, regardless of race, creed, sex, age, or disability.

We believe government is the servant of the people, not their master; that its powers should be limited to constitutionally authorized functions; that it must be fiscally responsible and tax only as necessary; that government closest to the people is generally the most accountable and effective; and that Idaho's sovereignty under the Tenth Amendment must be protected against federal overreach.

We believe in free enterprise, private property, individual initiative, sound money, and the right of citizens to acquire, use, and exchange the fruits of their labor free from unnecessary government interference.

We believe elections must be secure, transparent, and trustworthy; that every lawful vote should be counted without dilution or fraud; that the constitutional electoral process, including the Electoral College, must be preserved; and that Republican nominees should be chosen by Republicans loyal to the party and its principles.

We believe parents hold the primary authority over the upbringing and education of their children, that educational opportunities and public support should follow the child, and that schools should teach America's founding principles rather than ideological indoctrination.

We believe individuals and families have the freedom and responsibility to direct their own medical decisions, and that healthcare is best delivered through private enterprise rather than government command.

We believe Idaho's land, water, energy, and natural resources should be responsibly developed and stewarded by Idahoans for the benefit of Idahoans, with respect for private property, local control, and established water rights.

We believe government has a duty to secure our borders, defend our citizens, and maintain a military second to none; that America should seek peace and commerce with all nations; and that war should be undertaken only as a last resort in defense of our nation and pursuant to constitutional authority.

We believe the right of the individual to keep and bear arms is guaranteed and shall not be infringed.

We believe judges should faithfully interpret the law according to its original public meaning rather than legislate from the bench.

We believe in the presumption of innocence, in swift and just punishment for the guilty, in full restitution to victims, and in the genuine rehabilitation of those who will return to society.

We believe self-government depends on an informed, engaged, and civil citizenry, and we call every Idahoan to take an honest and active part in it.

We believe the Republican Party is the best vehicle for translating these ideals into positive and successful principles of government at the federal, state, and local levels.

We therefore adopt the **following Platform** for the 2026-2028 term:

Priorities for the 69th Idaho Legislature

Income Tax

We support reducing and eventually eliminating Idaho's income tax burden so that individuals, families, and businesses may keep more of the fruits of their labor and exercise greater freedom over their own resources.

Property Tax

We support meaningful property tax relief and the eventual elimination of taxes that place an ongoing burden on the ownership of private property and family homes.

School Choice

We support the Parental Choice Tax Credit and other policies that allow education funding to follow the student. We encourage the continued growth and expansion of educational choice opportunities as demand and available resources allow, ensuring that parents remain the primary decision-makers in their children's education.

Medicaid Reform

We support reforms that preserve care for the truly needy while promoting personal responsibility, protecting taxpayers, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of Idaho's healthcare programs. We support the repeal of Medicaid Expansion, which has expanded government dependency, weakened incentives for self-sufficiency, and increased the long-term fiscal obligations of the state.

Immigration Enforcement

We support the enforcement of immigration laws and cooperation among all levels of government to protect public safety, uphold the rule of law, and discourage unlawful entry and residence. We support mandatory use of the federal E-Verify system to help prevent unlawful employment and ensure that jobs are filled by those legally authorized to work in the United States.

Long-Term Water Storage

We support the development and maintenance of long-term water storage infrastructure to secure Idaho's water future, protect existing water rights, and support agriculture, communities, and economic growth.

Defend the Guard

We support preserving the Idaho National Guard's primary mission of defending our state and nation and oppose its use in ways that undermine constitutional limits or state sovereignty. We support legislation ensuring that the men and women of the Idaho National Guard are only deployed abroad following a congressional declaration of war.

Reduce Spending

We support reducing the size, scope, and cost of government by prioritizing constitutionally authorized functions and returning responsibility whenever possible to individuals, families, communities, and local government.