



## Quick Links

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## Pence Legislative Update, Week 1 - Jan. 12, 2012

We have the first week under our belts. It appears that the predictions of a short session may be correct if the pace of the action this week is any indication. The first signal is that there will be fewer rules to approve than in previous sessions. Rules are the guidelines for implementing legislation that was passed the previous year. We have to complete these before we can really launch into passing legislation. Two of the three rules Subcommittees, the Agriculture Crops and State Board of Education, met today and we have approved our assigned rules, as did several other committees. One factor responsible for fewer rules has to be that we are not instituting new programs. New programs would have required additional money and as you may be very aware, we were short of that in 2011.

It looks like 2012 may finally be the year that we get ethics reform. The Democratic Caucus jumped out on this issue this past Tuesday, calling for the formation of an Independent Ethics Commission. Today House and Senate Leadership teams from both the GOP and Democratic sides met with each other and agreed to pursue work on this issue. Reform is needed to help restore the public's confidence that Legislators are held to the same standards as the general public. Most Legislators meet this standard, but some recent high-profile cases have tarnished the rest of us. It is time to take a firm stand and an independent commission will be a good start.

Jobs are also a concern if we are to move forward on improving our economy. The Governors' program to encourage investment in high tech programs and the Democrats IJobs 2.0 series of job stimulation ideas are just two programs being floated.

Insurance exchanges will be a contentious issue this year. On one side you have those ideologically opposed to implementing any part of the Affordable Health Care Act. On the other side are those who accept that the exchanges are going forward, at least until the Supreme Court rules this summer. These last individuals want Idahoans leading the development of their exchanges, not the Federal Government. Governor Otter is joined by many business leaders supporting this last position.

This is shaping up to be an interesting session that may be over the last day of February if we do not get involved in too much controversy. Additionally, our Pizza and Politics mid-session meetings will be coming up on January 27th and January 28th. I hope many of you make time to attend one of these. The likely schedule is as follows:

Friday	Jan 27th.	5:30pm	Roosevelt Grill, Ketchum
Saturday	Jan. 28th.	8:00am	Oak Street Deli, Bellevue
		10:30am	Coffee House, North Shoshone
		12:15 pm	Zeppies Pizza, Gooding
		2:00 pm	City Hall, Wendell
		4:00 pm	City Hall, Hagerman

It is a pleasure to serve the people of District 25 again this year. Please contact me at [dpence@house.idaho.gov](mailto:dpence@house.idaho.gov), (208) 308-0046, or 1960 US Hwy 26, Gooding 83330 with any concerns or suggestions you may have.