

2026 Legislative Session – Week 7 Report

This week, candidates filed to run for office at state and federal levels of government. With very little action this week as legislators waited to see if they will have an opponent for the May primary, this update is focused on the election. Hopefully, the pace picks up again next week in the Statehouse.

The congressional races and the statewide elected offices are formalities this cycle, and we expect every incumbent to hold their office this term by comfortable margins. These offices are usually contested in primaries, but no serious primary challengers filed to run in the Republican primaries. Democrats did field candidates in each of these races, but Idaho's ruby-red voting record will keep incumbents in office.

With all 105 legislative seats on the ballot in 2026, several primaries stand out for repeat matchups, razor-thin margins, open seats created by resignations or non-reelections, or former legislators seeking returns.

There are three Democrats and nine Republicans who are unopposed and, therefore, effectively guaranteed a return to the Legislature. These include: Rep. Heather Scott (R-Blanchard), Rep. Jordan Redman (R-Coeur d'Alene), Rep. Toni Wisniewski (R-Post Falls), Sen. Janie Ward-Engleking (D-Boise), Rep. Ilana Rubel (D-Boise), Rep. Doug Pickett (R-Oakley), Rep. Clay Handy (R-Burley), Rep. Dave Cannon (R-Blackfoot), and Rep. Jon Weber (R-Rexburg).

In Senate District 1, Senator Jim Woodward and former legislator Scott Herndon will again match up in the Republican primary. Woodward defeated Herndon in the 2024 Republican primary (8,219 to 7,606), while Herndon defeated Woodward in the 2022 Republican primary (7,771 to 6,064).

In House District 30, Seat B, Rep. Ben Fuhriman and former legislator Julianne Young are again running against each other in the Republican primary. The last matchup between these candidates was decided by a 4-vote margin in the 2024 Republican primary (Fuhriman 3,764; Young 3,760). That narrow margin makes this one of the clearest "watch list" races based strictly on historical vote closeness.

In Senate District 11, Senator Camille Blaylock filed for re-election and is facing a Republican primary challenge from former legislator Chris Trakel, Blaylock's predecessor.

Several races merit attention because the incumbent is either an appointee now running for a full term or the seat is open with no incumbent. In House District 32, Seat B, Governor Little appointed Erin Bingham on Jan. 9, 2026, to fill the vacancy



created by Wendy Horman's resignation. The Republican primary is between Bingham and Brian McKellar.

In House District 35, Seat A, Governor Little appointed Michael Veile in September 2025 to fill the vacancy created when Kevin Andrus left the Legislature for a federal appointment. The Republican primary features Veile and Chad Christensen, who previously served in the Idaho House from 2018 to 2022.

In House District 16, Seat B, Gov. Little appointed Annie Henderson Haws in July 2025 to fill a vacancy after Rep. Todd Achilles resigned (Achilles had announced a U.S. Senate run as an independent). Henderson Haws filed for election; Chandler Stewart Hadraba filed as the Republican candidate for the seat.

In Legislative District 25 (Twin Falls County), the House Seat A contest is open and crowded after Rep. Lance Clow resigned, and the Governor's appointee, Don Hall, chose not to run this cycle for health reasons. Four Republicans filed for the seat: Grayson Stone (Hall's long-term sub), Andrew Messer, Josh Callen, and Zaine Newberry.

In House District 22, Seat A, Rep. John Vander Woude (Meridian), who chairs the House Health and Welfare Committee, is retiring from the Legislature. Two Republicans filed for the primary: Kelly Walton and former legislator Greg Ferch.

In Senate District 6, incumbent Senator Dan Foreman will be challenged by current Rep. Lori McCann in the GOP primary. Senate District 8 will see incumbent Senator Christy Zito face off against former legislators Megan Blanksma and Terry Gestrin. In House District 31, Seat B, incumbent Rep. Rod Furniss will take on former legislator Karey Hanks.

Finally, in District 24, Senator Glenneda Zuiderveld will have to contend with primary challenger Brent Reinke, a Twin Falls County Commissioner and former Director of the Idaho Department of Corrections.

Because Idaho allows for candidate withdrawals and write-in declarations, which are due March 6th, the most reliable "final" field snapshot is after that deadline. If you would like to see candidates in all of the statewide and local races, visit [Voteldaho.Gov](https://www.voteldaho.gov).