



BOISE PUBLIC LIBRARY

# Advocacy Toolkit

[BoisePublicLibrary.org](http://BoisePublicLibrary.org)



BOISE PUBLIC  
**Library!**

# AN AVERAGE WEEK IN THE LIFE OF THE BOISE PUBLIC LIBRARY

**5,100**

PEOPLE USED THE LIBRARY'S WI-FI WITH THEIR PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY

**59**

PROGRAMS OFFERED

**31,400**

BOOKS AND OTHER MATERIALS CHECKED OUT

**1,200**

PEOPLE ATTENDED PROGRAMS

**Library!**

**13,700**

PEOPLE VISITED A BOISE PUBLIC LIBRARY LOCATION

**24**

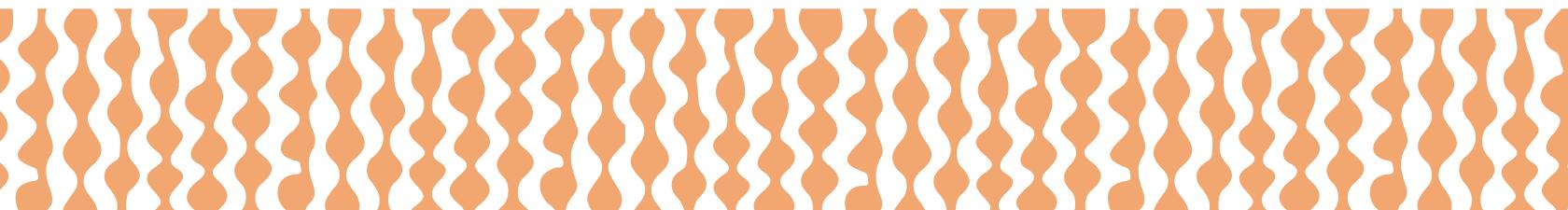
EARLY LITERACY PROGRAMS OFFERED

**1,600**

PEOPLE USED THE LIBRARY'S COMPUTERS AND LAPTOPS

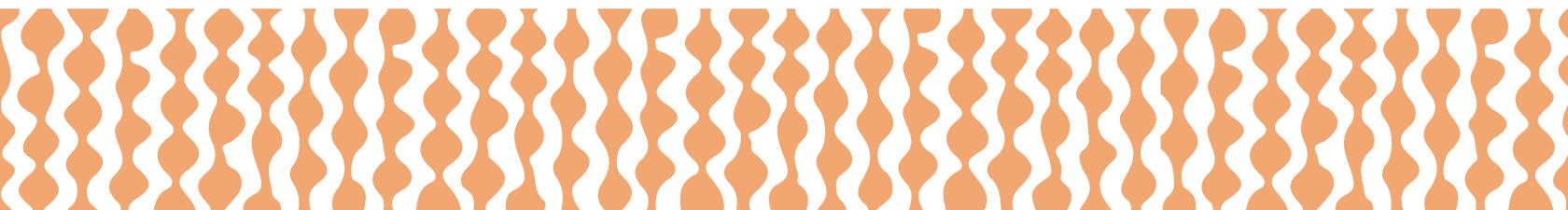
**18,000+**

DIGITAL MATERIALS CHECKED OUT



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	4
WHY ADVOCACY MATTERS .....	5
ABOUT THE BOISE PUBLIC LIBRARY .....	6
ADVOCACY CALENDAR .....	8
PROCESS FOR IDEAS TO BECOME A LAW .....	10
TOP TEN QUICK ADVOCACY TIPS .....	12
BOOK BANNING TALKING POINTS .....	13
HOW TO TALK TO PEOPLE WHO DISAGREE WITH YOU .....	15



# INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY FOR THE BOISE PUBLIC LIBRARY



Thank you for your interest in advocating on behalf of the Boise Public Library. This toolkit will help you promote the importance and value of the Boise Public Library to our community, including lawmakers. No matter what time of year or political climate, it is always the right time to advocate for your libraries and access to the materials, programs, and services to improve peoples' lives. We appreciate your support!

This toolkit has been adapted from a number of similar resources from the American Library Association, the Iowa Library Association, the Idaho Library Association, PEN America, United for Libraries, and the Cedar Rapids Public Library.



## WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

### ADVOCACY:

- Informs people about library services and their value to our community
- Demonstrates how public library services improve the lives of people in our community
- Speaks to the vision, mission, and values of the Boise Public Library
- Ensures libraries have resources to continue to offer materials, programs, and services
- Secures a place at the table for library leaders where important funding and policy decisions are made

## WHY IS ADVOCACY IMPORTANT?

Library advocacy ensures the Boise Public Library continues to have funding and governance to serve as a vital community resource for everyone in Boise. Regular and consistent advocacy with elected officials means there is a great chance of being top of mind when important decisions are being made.

Who should you advocate with?

The most important people to advocate with are the legislators who determine the funding and support that libraries receive and the laws under which they operate. This results in the opportunity to advocate for libraries at all levels of government:

- **At the national level**, you can advocate for laws that support fair digital content pricing and access and funding for support organizations such as the Institute of Museum and Library Services.
- **At the state level**, you can advocate for laws that protect intellectual freedom and funding for the Idaho Commission for Libraries.
- **At the local level**, you can advocate for additional funding for the Boise Public Library.

Some of the examples of the messages we hope you will share are:

- “The Boise Public Library is a vital community resource which provides access and opportunity to everyone in Boise.”
- “The Boise Public Library offers free resources, programs, and services that support education, economic development, and personal growth.”
- “The Boise Public Library serves our growing and diverse community and investing in the Library enhances our quality of life and builds community.”

## ABOUT THE BOISE PUBLIC LIBRARY

### VISION

- Boise Public Library is where everyone in Boise goes to grow.

### MISSION

- Our mission is to provide access and opportunity for everyone by connecting people to ideas, information, and community.

### VALUES

- We welcome and serve everyone.
- We provide information, services, and programs that are free and open to all.
- We create respectful, safe, and inspiring spaces for the entire community.
- We uphold the right to privacy and the freedom to read, seek, and hold different points of view.
- We adapt to emerging needs in our community.

Boise Public Library is a city department governed by a Board of Trustees which sets strategy and policy for the operations of the Library. The members of the Board are appointed by the mayor and approved by the City Council. Boise Public Library is one of sixteen departments in the City of Boise and is primarily funded by tax dollars through the City of Boise's General Fund.



## BOISE PUBLIC LIBRARY MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

ALEX



“I moved back to Boise as an adult with my husband and our young son a few years ago. At the time I was struggling to find community and make friends and all the kids’ programs at the Library at Hillcrest were such a boon to us. Now we know most of the librarians there by name and we love going there every week to check out new books or attend different events. Thank you, Hillcrest librarians, for helping me and my family to build community and friendships!”

KYLIE

“My toddler has been attending Family Storytime at Hillcrest with some regularity over the last year. As she has started to explore letter sounds and words, I have caught her using a Miss Katie trick. When she wants to pronounce something carefully, or figure out a letter, she will tap her chin as she says the letter sound to identify if it fits the word. It has been so exciting to see how something so small from storytime is making such a big impact on her learning!”



MARY ANN



“Our independent living facility has a sizeable library, but it’s top-heavy with James Patterson, Nora Roberts and cat stories. Since my reading is more eclectic, I live for our monthly visit from Tiffany and her homebound library collection. She introduced me to the Ultimate Book Nerd program two years ago, and now there are half a dozen of us reading and talking about books we never dreamed we’d ever read.”

# ADVOCACY CALENDAR

Use this calendar as a general guide to engage with stakeholders throughout the year.

## JANUARY

Mark important state legislative dates on your calendar, many of which you can find at [legislature.idaho.gov/calendar/](http://legislature.idaho.gov/calendar/) including when the Governor will be delivering the State of the State Address. Watch for bills being introduced and notice any library-specific initiatives proposed. Bills will get hearings as early as week two of the session so expect that discussions will move quickly.

Welcome new members of the Boise City Council via email, phone or at a City Council meeting. Look out for library-specific topics for City Council meetings. That calendar can be found at [cityofboise.org/departments/public-meetings](http://cityofboise.org/departments/public-meetings)

## FEBRUARY

This is an important time to continue to check in on bills that are being introduced in committee. Make plans to submit testimony or testify in person. Watch for bills that have made it out of committee as well.

## MAY

Thank your elected officials for their support during the legislative session. Encourage them to visit one of the Boise Public Library branches during the summer to see it in action. There are dozens of programs to enjoy!

Primary elections are also held in May. Be sure you are registered to vote and make a plan to vote. Contact your candidates and ask them about their support of libraries or stance on censorship. Let them know that libraries are important to you.

## JUNE

Summer is the busiest time of year at the Library! Register for the Summer Reading Program at [boisepubliclibrary.org/summer](http://boisepubliclibrary.org/summer) and share Boise Public Library social media posts to help spread the word about events happening all summer long.

## SEPTEMBER

It's National Library Card Sign Up Month! Tag local and state elected officials in social media posts encouraging people to sign up for a library card. Share your favorite library memories and stories on your own social media accounts.

## OCTOBER

The third week of October is National Friends of Libraries Week, so it is a great time to contact your candidates and ask them about their support of libraries or stance on censorship. Let them know that libraries are important to you.

## MARCH

As we get near the end of session, keep a close eye on the legislature as bills may be introduced and passed out of committee very quickly and with little notice. The target date for the legislature to adjourn is usually mid-March. In addition, every March 2nd is Read Across America Day, and every March 16th is Freedom of Information Day. Both days are the perfect time to reach out to a legislator and tell them how much you value reading, access to information, and your libraries.

## APRIL

Celebrate National Library Week in April! Share your library story with friends and family during this annual celebration and encourage others to do the same.

## JULY

Connect with City Council members about the next fiscal year's budget and how they can support the library. Send them a note to thank them for their support. Ask them to reach out to their Library Director if they'd like a tour or to speak in person about the library.

## AUGUST

Get ready for back-to-school season and turn in your Summer Reading Program trackers!

## NOVEMBER

Get out and vote! Cast your ballot for candidates who support libraries and oppose censorship, and encourage others to do the same.

## DECEMBER

The end of the calendar year means the next legislative session is coming soon. Reach out to elected officials to invite them to events, thank them for their support, and encourage them to connect with their library.

# PROCESS FOR IDEAS TO BECOME A LAW

- 1. IDEA** – A legislator decides, or a group of legislators decide, to sponsor a bill. Ideas may come from legislators, constituents, special interest groups, or government agencies.
- 2. BILL DRAFTED** – The idea is drafted into a bill by the Legislative Services Research & Legislation Division. It will be assigned a routing slip, or “RS” number.
- 3. BILL INTRODUCED** – A bill may be introduced in either the House or Senate by a member, a group of members, or a standing committee. When the RS is approved after a short committee hearing, it is assigned a bill number and referred to committee.
- 4. COMMITTEE HEARING** – The committee conducts a study of information about the proposed law. This may include research, public hearings, expert testimony, and statements of interested parties. A bill may be reported out of committee with the following recommendations:
  - Do pass
  - Without recommendation
  - To be placed on General Orders for amendment
  - Do not pass
  - Withdrawn with the privilege of introducing another bill (Senate only)
  - Referred to the Clerk’s office for referral by the Speaker to another standing committeeMany bills are not reported out and “die in committee” at the discretion of the committee chair
- 5. SECOND READING** – When a bill is reported out of committee, it is placed on the Second Reading Calendar and read again. The following legislative day, the bill is automatically placed on the Third Reading Calendar unless other action is taken.
- 6. THIRD READING** – It is at the Third Reading that the bill is ready for debate and the final vote on the passage of the bill is taken. If a bill passes one house it is transmitted to the other house where it will follow a similar path, starting with a committee hearing and relevant floor vote.
- 7. GOVERNOR** – If a bill passes both houses, it advances to the Governor. The Governor may take one of three actions:
  - Approve the bill by signing it (within 5 days after receipt or within 10 days of the close of session)
  - Allow the bill to become law without his approval by not signing it within the five days allowed
  - Veto the bill within 5 days of receipt and return it to the house of origin

If a bill is vetoed by the Governor, the bill returns to the floor where it can be overridden (become law) with the support of 2/3 of House members and 2/3 of Senate members.

## PUBLIC TESTIMONY

One way to participate in the legislative process is to provide public testimony. Information regarding accessibility and public testimony, including how to provide remote testimony, can be found at the following link: [legislature.idaho.gov/resources/leg-accessibility-pub-testimony](https://legislature.idaho.gov/resources/leg-accessibility-pub-testimony)

## IDAHO LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The Idaho Library Association (ILA) advocates on behalf of Idaho's libraries and promotes the right to read and free expression for all Idahoans. Join ILA to receive regular legislative updates and support Idaho libraries: [idaholibraries.org](https://idaholibraries.org)

## DID YOU KNOW?

You could also consider making a tax-deductible donation through the Boise Public Library Foundation at [boisepubliclibrary.org/foundation](https://boisepubliclibrary.org/foundation). Funds raised through the Foundation are used exclusively for the benefit of the Boise Public Library and are not part of the City of Boise budget.



# TOP TEN QUICK ADVOCACY TIPS

When library issues arise in public policy debates, library advocates should be ready to reach out to their public officials and share your expectation they will protect our libraries and our rights!

1. **Get to know your state and local elected officials.** Do not wait until you need something to connect. Idaho officials are very accessible and want to meet with their local constituents to better understand their needs and concerns.
2. **Do your homework.** Reach out to the Boise Public Library or the Idaho Library Association for background on the specific issue and how best to frame your message.
3. **Know your audience.** Research positions of elected officials in advance. Understand what they care about and consider how your request aligns with these.
4. **Contact elected officials personally if possible.** A meeting is better than a phone call, a phone call is better than an email, and an email is better than not connecting.
5. **Always start with a thank you.** Find something the elected official has recently supported which has a positive community impact and thank them for that.
6. **Keep it brief.** Share the most important facts and the few best arguments.
7. **Make it personal.** Explain how the issue impacts you and your family/friends.
8. **Make a clear request.** Ask them to specifically SUPPORT or OPPOSE legislation, for help to change the legislation, or invite them to attend an event to learn more about a particular issue.
9. **Be polite, but direct,** and try to get a commitment to support the Library and your position.
10. **Follow up.** Once the issue is resolved, make sure to thank those who supported the Library, and commit to reconnecting with those who did not.

# BOOK BANNING

Efforts to censor material in libraries are on the rise in Idaho and around the country. These efforts seek to limit the viewpoints available to minors by suppressing and erasing already marginalized voices. They are not supported by the majority of voters.

The Boise Public Library does not carry porn and independent studies show that children do not access porn in libraries. Censorship laws are generally not intended to address an actual problem that exists in our libraries but are intended to create a chilling effect that will cause libraries to remove materials that some find objectionable in order to avoid the threat of costly litigation.

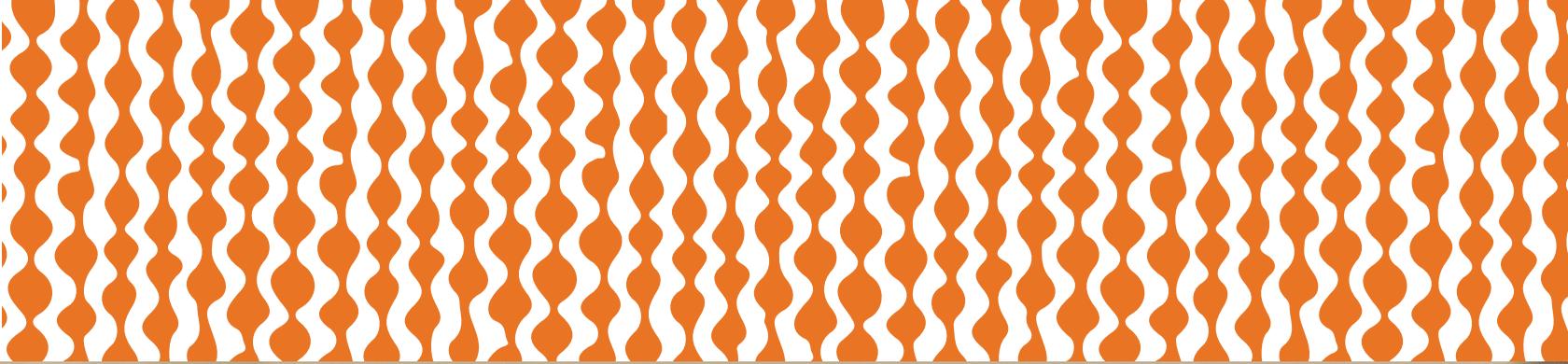
Most of the materials targeted for censorship are authored by or contain characters that are LGBTQ+ or people of color. Proponents of censorship know that they cannot succeed in having these materials removed on this basis, so they attempt to label the materials as "pornography," "obscenity," or "material harmful to minors."

Many of these proposed laws are designed to suppress and erase already marginalized voices, particularly LGBTQ+ and people of color.

## TALKING POINTS

- Parents have the right and responsibility to guide their children's reading, but individuals should not be making decisions for other readers or other parents' children.
- The First Amendment protects access to information and the right to read.
- The legislature cannot prohibit or restrict access to information just because they don't like the message conveyed.
- The legislature cannot dictate what people can or cannot read.
- Libraries include materials in their collections that meet the needs of ALL people in their community. What is right for some may not be appropriate for others.
- Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Books on controversial or challenging topics create opportunities for growth and learning and help youth critically navigate their world.
- Librarians are professionals who take their job and responsibilities seriously. They are trained to not impose their own thoughts and opinions on which ideas are right, but to make knowledge and ideas available so that everyone has the freedom to choose what to read and the ability to form their own opinions.





# HOW TO TALK TO PEOPLE WHO DISAGREE WITH YOU

It can be challenging to talk to people who disagree with you. The Center for Media Engagement interviewed people who live in communities with a mix of political beliefs to identify their best strategies for talking to people with whom they disagree. Their findings offer five main approaches for talking across political differences.

## 1. FOCUS ON THE PEOPLE, NOT THE POLITICS

- Build a relationship before talking politics
- Don't take comments personally
- Share your own relevant experiences
- Give a relatable hypothetical situation

## 2. FIND COMMON GROUND

- Bond over less polarized issues
- Be open to listening and understanding
- Ask questions to understand a different viewpoint
- Focus on shared beliefs

## 3. STICK TO THE FACTS AND AVOID CONFRONTATION

- Stick to information that can be verified
- Back up your opinions with evidence
- Limit emotion in discussion
- Avoid confrontational language

## 4. BE AN ADVOCATE RATHER THAN AN OPPONENT

- Adapt conversational style to audience
- Avoid words that might upset people

## 5. PICK YOUR BATTLES

- Focus on policy instead of party
- Avoid hot-button issues

# ADVOCACY CONTACT LIST 2026

## FEDERAL

**Representative Russ Fulcher** [fulcher.house.gov](mailto:fulcher.house.gov)

**Representative Mike Simpson** [simpson.house.gov](mailto:simpson.house.gov)

**Senator Mike Crapo** [crapo.senate.gov](mailto:crapo.senate.gov)

**Senator Jim Risch** [risch.senate.gov](mailto:risch.senate.gov)

## STATE

### STATE SENATORS

District 15: **Codi Galloway**

[cgalloway@senate.idaho.gov](mailto:cgalloway@senate.idaho.gov)

District 16: **Alison "Ali" Rabe** [arabe@senate.idaho.gov](mailto:arabe@senate.idaho.gov)

District 17: **Carrie Semmelroth**

[csemmelroth@senate.idaho.gov](mailto:csemmelroth@senate.idaho.gov)

District 18: **Janie Ward-Engelking**

[jwardengelking@senate.idaho.gov](mailto:jwardengelking@senate.idaho.gov)

District 19: **Melissa Wintrow**

[mwintrow@senate.idaho.gov](mailto:mwintrow@senate.idaho.gov)

District 20: **Josh Keyser** [jkeyser@senate.idaho.gov](mailto:jkeyser@senate.idaho.gov)

District 21: **Treg Bernt** [tbernt@senate.idaho.gov](mailto:tbernt@senate.idaho.gov)

District 22: **Lori Den Hartog**

[ldenhartog@senate.idaho.gov](mailto:ldenhartog@senate.idaho.gov)

### STATE HOUSE REPRESENTATIVES

District 15: **Steve Berch** [sberch@house.idaho.gov](mailto:sberch@house.idaho.gov)

District 15: **Dori Healey** [dhealey@house.idaho.gov](mailto:dhealey@house.idaho.gov)

District 16: **Anne Henderson Haws**

[ahendersonhaws@house.idaho.gov](mailto:ahendersonhaws@house.idaho.gov)

District 16: **Soñia Galaviz** [sgalaviz@house.idaho.gov](mailto:sgalaviz@house.idaho.gov)

District 17: **John Gannon** [jgannon@house.idaho.gov](mailto:jgannon@house.idaho.gov)

District 17: **Megan Egbert** [megbert@house.idaho.gov](mailto:megbert@house.idaho.gov)

District 18: **Brooke Green** [bgreen@house.idaho.gov](mailto:bgreen@house.idaho.gov)

District 18: **Ilana Rubel** [irubel@house.idaho.gov](mailto:irubel@house.idaho.gov)

District 19: **Chris Mathias** [cmathias@house.idaho.gov](mailto:cmathias@house.idaho.gov)

District 19: **Monica Church** [mchurch@house.idaho.gov](mailto:mchurch@house.idaho.gov)

District 20: **James Holtzclaw** [jholtzclaw@house.idaho.gov](mailto:jholtzclaw@house.idaho.gov)

District 20: **Joe Palmer** [jpalmer@house.idaho.gov](mailto:jpalmer@house.idaho.gov)

District 21: **James Petzke** [jpetzke@house.idaho.gov](mailto:jpetzke@house.idaho.gov)

District 21: **Jeff Ehlers** [jehlers@house.idaho.gov](mailto:jehlers@house.idaho.gov)

District 22: **Jason Monks** [jmonks@house.idaho.gov](mailto:jmonks@house.idaho.gov)

District 22: **John Vander Woude**

[jvanderwoude@house.idaho.gov](mailto:jvanderwoude@house.idaho.gov)

## COUNTY

### ADA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

District 1: **Ryan Davidson**

District 2: **Rod Beck** (Chair)

District 3: **Tom Dayley**

[bocc1@adacounty.id.gov](mailto:bocc1@adacounty.id.gov)

## CITY

### MAYOR OF BOISE

**Lauren McLean**

[mayormclean@cityofboise.org](mailto:mayormclean@cityofboise.org)

### BOISE CITY COUNCIL

District 1: **Lucy Willits**

District 2: **Colin Nash**

District 3: **Kathy Corless**

District 4: **Jordan Morales**

District 5: **Meredith Stead**

District 6: **Jimmy Hallyburton**

[citycouncil@cityofboise.org](mailto:citycouncil@cityofboise.org)

## BOISE PUBLIC LIBRARY

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Ron Pisaneschi**, President

**Nicole Trammel Pantera**, Vice President

**Brian Klene**, Trustee

**Reshma Kamal**, Trustee

**Evelyn Johnson**, Trustee

[bplboardtrustee@cityofboise.org](mailto:bplboardtrustee@cityofboise.org)

### LIBRARY

**Jessica Dorr**, Director

[librarydirector@cityofboise.org](mailto:librarydirector@cityofboise.org)



BOISE PUBLIC  
**Library!**

## KEY STATISTICS FY25



**738,535**

total visitors to  
all five locations



**1.6 million**

physical books  
circulated in Boise



**17,895**

rooms booked at  
all five locations



**1.18 million**

digital/audio  
books circulated



**103,594**

requests for  
information answered



**8,876**

new library  
cards issued



**3,315**

total programs



**91,236**

people attended  
library programs



**\$1.09 million**

contributed in economic  
value to entrepreneurs  
and businesses in Boise

## IDAHO LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP INFORMATION 2025-2026

### SENATE

President Pro Tempore: **Kelly Anthon**, D27

[kanthon@senate.idaho.gov](mailto:kanthon@senate.idaho.gov)

Majority Leader: **Lori Den Hartog**, D22

[ldenhartog@senate.idaho.gov](mailto:ldenhartog@senate.idaho.gov)

Assistant Majority Leader: **Mark Harris**, D35

[mharris@senate.idaho.gov](mailto:mharris@senate.idaho.gov)

Majority Caucus Chair: **Ben Toews**, D4

[btoews@senate.idaho.gov](mailto:btoews@senate.idaho.gov)

Minority Leader: **Melissa Wintrow**, D19

[mwintrow@senate.idaho.gov](mailto:mwintrow@senate.idaho.gov)

Assistant Minority Leader: **James Ruchti**, D29

[jruchti@senate.idaho.gov](mailto:jruchti@senate.idaho.gov)

Minority Caucus Chair: **Janie Ward-Engelking**, D18

[jwardengelking@senate.idaho.gov](mailto:jwardengelking@senate.idaho.gov)

### HOUSE

Speaker: **Mike Moyle**, D10

[mmoyle@house.idaho.gov](mailto:mmoyle@house.idaho.gov)

Majority Leader: **Jason Monks**, D22

[jmonks@house.idaho.gov](mailto:jmonks@house.idaho.gov)

Assistant Majority Leader: **Douglas Pickett**, D27

[dpickett@house.idaho.gov](mailto:dpickett@house.idaho.gov)

Majority Caucus Chair: **Jaron Crane**, D12

[jcrane@house.idaho.gov](mailto:jcrane@house.idaho.gov)

Minority Leader: **Ilana Rubel**, D18

[irubel@house.idaho.gov](mailto:irubel@house.idaho.gov)

Assistant Minority Leader: **Steve Berch**, D15

[sberch@house.idaho.gov](mailto:sberch@house.idaho.gov)

Minority Caucus Chair: **Monica Church**, D19

[mchurch@house.idaho.gov](mailto:mchurch@house.idaho.gov)



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To learn more about the Boise Public Library, including how to support the Library,  
please visit our website [boisepubliclibrary.org](https://boisepubliclibrary.org)