

Legislative Initiatives Policy

Adopted 01-08-2020

Introduction

Executive Order 2019-08 states that the Idaho Workforce Development Council (“Council”) is responsible for advising the Governor, Legislature and appropriate executive agencies on matters related to developing and implementing a comprehensive workforce development strategy for Idaho that:

- Increases public awareness of and access to career education and training opportunities.
- Improves the effectiveness, quality and coordination of programs and services designed to maintain a highly skilled workforce.
- Helps provide for the most efficient use of federal, state and local workforce development resources.

In furtherance of this responsibility, the Council may, from time to time, develop initiatives that require legislative approval and/or provide supportive comments on initiatives sponsored by partner organizations. This policy provides a framework for the approval of initiatives and the conduct of Council members and staff in communicating with policymakers.

The Council considers “advising” to be the provision of opinions, or sharing of information, based on expertise on initiatives that align to the Council’s role and strategic plan at forums where policymakers are requesting input. As a state government entity, the Council shall not expend funds for the purpose of influencing the approval, modification, or rejection of any legislation by the legislature of the state of Idaho.

The Council serves at the pleasure of the Governor and will align any positions, statements or initiatives with the Governor’s priorities. This requires that all positions, statements, and initiatives be approved by the Governor’s office prior to any Council member or staff communicating on behalf of the Council. Council members, when representing their own businesses or entities, must be careful to keep separate their own initiatives from those of the Council.

Process – Council-led Initiatives

Council members and partners are welcome to propose ideas to the Policy Committee at any time by requesting that the topic be added to the agenda of a standing Policy Committee meeting. The Policy Committee shall evaluate the idea against the Council’s strategic plan and determine if it should be referred to another committee for refinement or proposed to the full Council. If another committee is working on a concept that may require legislative approval (including budget approval), the committee chair should seek input from the Policy Committee as soon as feasible. Generally, these types of initiatives should be vetted well in advance of the legislative session such that they can be discussed and approved at the fall Council meeting, if there is no budget impact. Items with budget implications will need approval at the summer Council meeting in order to be included when the Council submits its budget on September 1.

Process – Partner-led Initiatives

Council staff will request information on the legislative priorities of partners in October of each year and present them to the Policy Committee in November. The Policy Committee will determine which initiatives align with the Council's strategic plan and present a "Legislative Priorities" summary to the Council at its January meeting. The Council shall finalize and formally adopt such document, subject to approval from the Governor's office.

Guidance on Approved Initiatives

Once initiatives/legislative priorities have been approved by the Council and Governor's Office, Staff and Executive Committee members are permitted to testify in legislative committee hearings/meetings. With approval from the Chair, other Council members may testify as appropriate. All members of the Council are welcome to discuss the legislative priorities of the Council within the framework of advocacy, as described in the Introduction section of this document.

Time Sensitive Issues

The processes described above should be utilized whenever possible; however, when an issue comes up during the legislative session that needs immediate action, the Executive Director has authority to advise on issues that are clearly aligned to the Council's strategic plan and approved by the Governor's Office. The Executive Director should seek input from the Executive Committee, if he/she has any questions. The Executive Director shall report to the Executive Committee and Council any testimony provided on behalf of the Council by the end of the week that the testimony is provided.

