

Spring Magazine 2021

Idaho Insider by Suzi Budge

Idaho Member Meeting in Las Vegas — We will see you in February 2022

We missed you in 2021 for our mid-session legislative update, but look forward to seeing everyone again in Las Vegas in 2022!

2021 IPM&CSA Legislative Agenda: Industry Issues to Watch

The “new normal” impacts everything these days, and that includes the 2021 legislative session in Boise. By most states’ standards, the Idaho Statehouse is wide open, but operations at the state capitol are definitely not “business as usual” in 2021. The building is much quieter than usual with fewer people on site, and many of those behind closed doors and doing business virtually. Rooms are locked and access is limited except during regularly scheduled committee meetings. Hearings and some testimony allow virtual options, which actually may improve access for folks outside of the “Great state of Ada.”

Legislators are in the building, with and without masks, and they must be present to vote on the floor and in committees. Legislative rules don’t allow otherwise. These days, the head count of state troopers and security guards exceed the number of lobbyists, reflecting the ongoing tension surrounding the 2021 legislative session and operations in the Statehouse.

Industry Issues to Watch: Although the usual cadre of legislative advocates are not at the Statehouse in 2021, IPM&CSA representatives are on the ground and engaged with lawmakers during this very unusual session. Here are some issues to watch:

- IPM&CSA’s priority is to clarify the Idaho Consumer Protection Act to specify that the statute prohibiting excessive pricing during a declared emergency applies to exorbitant or excessive increased prices to the consumer rather than to the margin between wholesale and retail prices.
- Governor Little’s State of the State laid out his “Building Idaho’s Future” plan to “provide tax relief and make strategic investments, including:
 - \$450 million in tax relief.
 - \$126 million in state and local highway infrastructure projects with \$80 million in new ongoing transportation funding - \$40 million of this to be new revenues.
 - Education – literacy, higher ed and career technical programs.
 - Law enforcement to support frontline personnel.
 - \$35 million in broadband investment to improve internet connectivity for underserved areas.
 - Agriculture and water infrastructure projects.
 - Support for small business on top of the \$300 million in federal CARES Act funds.
 - Criminal justice investments and capital construction.

• COVID Liability Protection for Businesses – The bill passed during the August special session will expire on July 1, 2021, making this issue a priority for the legislature to revisit this session.

Legislative Wrap-Up Much of the action takes place in the final days of the legislature, when it is never safe to leave the Statehouse. The going home issues in 2021 may include tax relief on property and groceries, COVID liability protection, and the Governor's infrastructure plan. But COVID-19 looms large in 2021 with battles over balance of power and executive authority, distribution of federal CARES Act funds, and what to do with Idaho's record revenue surplus -- all contributing to a legislative session like no other. Be on the lookout for a thorough review after the 2021 session wraps up, hopefully in late March.

Upcoming Event Reminders

IPM&CSA PAC Golf Event – Tuesday, April 20, 2021 Ridgecrest Golf Course, Nampa Idaho – Register online at <https://www.wpma.com/idaho/calendar-of-events>; Stay tuned for details on lunch and tee times.

IPM&CSA Board Meeting – Wednesday, April 21, 2021 – IPM&CSA board members will meet April 21 in Boise to review the legislative session and plan for the upcoming convention in Sun Valley.

Energy Marketers of America (EMA) Day on the Hill – Washington D.C. May 12-14, 2020 – Mayflower Hotel, 1127 Connecticut Ave. NW, WDC 20036 – IPM&CSA will make our annual trip to Washington D.C. to visit members of the Idaho Congressional Delegation for EMA Board Meeting and Day on the Hill, set for Thursday, May 13.

IPM&CSA Convention and Trade Show – August 4-6, 2021 Sun Valley Resort – Call now and reserve your room at the Sun Valley Resort. Our room block always fills up early for our annual event, so be sure to get your spot reserved early. (Register online for the convention at <http://www.wpma.com>. Rooms booked separately with the resort. Ask for the IPM&CSA room block.)