

Message to the Ada County Republican Central Committee

The Ada County Republicans' mission is straightforward and in our bylaws: "The mission of the Ada County Republican Central Committee is to promote the Republican Philosophy, build and strengthen the Republican Party from the grassroots up, and elect Republican candidates."

Over the last three years, the Ada County Central Committee has accomplished extraordinary things. As a team, we have much to be proud of.

- Since 2020, we have worked together to recapture all of the Ada County Commissioners' seats. After the 2022 elections, Republicans control all 9 Ada County Officers' seats for the first time since 2008.
- In 2022, Republican turnout in Ada County was 69.1%, 10.5% higher than Democrats and 22.5% higher than Unaffiliated voter turnout. And that carried candidates like Rich Riffle, our new coroner, to victory.
- Since June 2020, more than 1,925 donors have provided nearly \$600,000 in cash and in-kind donations. Ada County has deployed more than \$260,000 into elections, backing Republicans at the State, legislative, city, and school board levels.
- Since June 2020, we have printed almost 60,000 pieces of literature for door-to-door efforts, sent nearly 200,000 pieces of campaign/candidate mail, delivered 50+ digital ad campaigns, sent out more than 200,000+ texts, and made tens of thousands of phone contacts with voters. In 2022, for the first time, we had a phone banking event in which all of Idaho's Constitutional officers participated.
- And the Party, all of us, knocked on 70,000+ doors on behalf of candidates. We also grew Facebook from 500 followers to nearly 5,750 followers, using the platform to promote Republican candidates and drawing attention to the failed beliefs and practices of the Democrats. And most importantly, for over two years, we have joined in Sunday prayer on our Facebook site.
- We created a new AdaCountyGOP.com website that includes an online voter guide and a voter resources section that tells voters how to register and where to vote and even shows voters what their ballots will look like.
- During the 2022 election, Ada County GOP did an absentee voter push and chase for the first time.
- During 2021 and 2022, we had multiple educational sessions to ensure our Precinct Committeemen understood their role, the Strategic plan approved by our body, parliamentary procedures, and the Ada county voter lists to help them contact new and current Republicans in their district.
- In 2021, the Party decided to work on municipal elections – Boise elected Republican Luci Willits for City Council – Republicans won all the races in Eagle, Meridian, Kuna, and Star, and we successfully fended off a progressive takeover of Garden City by Hannah Ball and former legislator John McCrostie.
- At the School Board level, we flipped the West Ada School Board from a 4-1 Democrat majority to a 5-0 Republican one. And while we hoped to win more School Board seats in Boise, turnout was up 285% last year. In 2021, more than 175 volunteers canvassed for at least one shift.

- We organized and held fun events – a VE Day Celebration – two auctions – a “Salute to Republican Elected Officials and Candidates,” and hosted our first Ronald Reagan Dinner featuring Burgess Owens. We have had legendary Western Idaho Fair Booths and even held our first Ada County Candidate Fair in 2022.

There are Democrat seats to be won in November 2023, and we hope to replace Democrats with Republicans. We should all be proud of our effort to elect Republicans. We should all be proud of the critical conservative legislation passed and signed into law by Republicans – property tax cuts – income tax cuts – protecting minors – protecting women in sports and schools – protecting the unborn - protecting the 2nd Amendment - protecting the State from ESG – bills addressing the threat of China and so many others.

But clearly and sadly, the State Party (IDGOP) is on a path that no longer seeks to expand the size of the Republican Party but instead seeks to contract it through purity tests, making it difficult for voters to join us.

The IDGOP seems intent on shrinking the Republican Party, not growing it. The IDGOP now makes it difficult to allow newly minted Republican converts to participate in the Party. With Democrat policies destroying the U.S. and President Biden’s strong disapproval ratings, some Unaffiliated voters and Democrats genuinely want to join the Republican Party. But, because of IDGOP's new rules, they will not be able to participate in certain aspects of Party activity until a “waiting period” is over.

Purity tests are being exercised in two ways.

- The IDGOP no longer sees the majesty of the voter and the voter’s ability to choose the candidate they want to represent them in a primary/general election. Instead, the IDGOP seems intent on telling the voters for whom they should vote through vetting and party endorsements. However, vetting is susceptible to the political biases of the few people doing the “vetting.” Party elites will now pick candidates. There is even a movement in the Party to have ALL candidates in the Primary picked by the IDGOP State Central Committee. The Party believes the average voter is too uninformed, too ignorant, and too unsophisticated to make good choices. This type of vetting is happening in Ada County right now. Currently, at least one Legislative District is “endorsing” city and school board candidates, which violates Idaho Republican State Party rules.
- Additionally, the State Party has inverted its power. Voters will not decide whether a candidate should be re-elected; instead, a small group of PCs will. This small group of Precinct Committeemen can bring an elected official to a “tribunal,” censure them, and ultimately strip them of their ability to use Republican funds or even the Republican logo for five years. There is no appeal process for elected officials to seek remedy from the decisions made in these tribunals. PCs can force U.S. Senators and Representatives, the Idaho Governor, and state Senators and Representatives to face “charges.” The average PC only receives, on average, 150 votes statewide. The voter should choose the fate of an elected official through re-election or rejection at the ballot box at the next election.

We are now a Party of dues – just like liberal Unions. The Party expects the Counties to pay \$250,000 in dues to the State Party, but counties have not been told what they are paying for—there is no financial transparency at the IDGOP level. Paying dues is not Republican; the vast majority of GOP county parties (estimated at 95%+) across the U.S. do NOT pay dues to their State parties. In Idaho, the dues system makes no sense - all counties are treated equally. But 43% of all Democrats live in Ada County, and 14 of 18 Democrat legislators live in Ada County. Ada County is forced to pay \$64,000 in “dues” when this money should be used to help Republican candidates win in a battleground county. The State Party should support battleground counties, not financially drain them.

The IDGOP slashed \$100,000 of registration fees for delegates to the 2024 convention and then moved that cost to all the Counties.

Additionally, we are now a Party that treats voting members unequally. Convention delegates from counties must pay \$250,000 in combined dues to attend the 2024 IDGOP convention, while delegates from Legislative Districts pay \$0, nothing.

Several Ada County Central Committee members have committed to actions they knew would damage Ada County.

Member Actions Such As:

- Ada County PC 1408, Steve Bender, also the State GOP Treasurer, pushed a \$64,000 dues system on Ada County that materially harmed Ada’s ability to support its candidates.
- Ada County PC 1710, Matthew Jensen, traveled all the way to Kootenai County to introduce a rule that would strip Ada County of its delegates if we did not pay these dues on an expedited timetable. He made false charges against the Chair that were supposed to be presented and reviewed at the Winter 2022 meeting. These charges were never brought to the IDGOP as they were unsubstantiated.
- The State IDGOP Rules Committee set aside decades of precedent and ended a system that allowed counties to earn credits towards their dues by doing work benefitting the IDGOP party.
- Ada County PC 1917, Lynn Bradescu, brought a rule to the IDGOP Summer meeting taking away the proxy voting rights of the Ada County PCs in the military, those traveling for personal or business purposes, those attending students’ sporting activities, arts, or other school events, and those dealing with family issues. 80% of the PCs in Ada County have not named an alternate, as alternates were not elected to serve. Lynn Bradescu used multiple proxies in our past Central Committee meetings. This rule was crafted only to apply to County Central Committees; the rule still allows Legislative Districts (Lynn Bradescu is also the chair of Legislative District 19) to use proxies - even though the Legislative Districts have the same alternates as the Central Committee. One rule for the LDs, another rule for the County.
- Despite having a legal opinion from former Attorney General David Leroy stating that the Chair is entitled to it, Ada County’s secretary, Colette Costello, PC 1403, still refused to give the Ada County Chair, the Executive Committee, or any Committee Chairs, access to the names and contact information of the Ada County PCs. No valid reason was given

for withholding this information. The Ada County Chair is the only Chair in the State who does not have access to his roster of Ada County PCs.

- Instead of lending a helping hand to our volunteer Ada County GOP Treasurer, 17 members filed an anonymous complaint against him. In the complaint sent to the Treasurer and the Chair, all the names on the complaint were blacked out, preventing him from being able to face his accusers. Later, the document was leaked by Laurel Morgan (our own PC 2008 & State Party Office Admin), on behalf of the IDGOP, with all information regarding the complaint and the original appeal before the appeals process was completed, which is against Robert's Rules of Order. The 17 formerly redacted names on the complaint are: Cheryl Hurd, the LD 20 chair and also PC 2005; Laurel Morgan, PC 2008 and also the State Party Office Administrator; Lynn Bradescu, PC 1917 and also the LD 19 chair; Jeff Russell, PC 1414; Dawn Retzlaff, PC 1818 and LD 18 Chair; Cheryl Fabello alternate PC 1703; Robert Brown alternate PC 1717; Ashley Mujagic the Ada County youth chair; Susan Gaston Alternate PC 1819; Stanley Roach PC 1919; Darcy Horton PC 1918; Kristin Campbell Alternate PC 2009; Cyndi Uhlenhoff PC 1502; Alexandria Danolovitch PC 2210; Colette Costello PC 1403 and Ada County Secretary; Jacquelyn Davidson PC 1614, and Nick Barber PC 1907.
- Although filed on April 20, this "complaint" was held by the State Party for six weeks, until June 2, so that the complaint would be left in the hands of the State Party instead of allowing the Ada County Republican Central Committee to address issues in its May 4th and June 1st Central Committee meetings. In addition, before this "complaint" was delivered to the Ada County Chair and Treasurer, it was leaked to the press on the same day it was sent to the Chair and the Treasurer.
<https://idahodispatch.com/breaking-news-idaho-state-gop-chairwoman-notifies-ada-county-gop-chairman-of-investigation-into-finances/>
- On Saturday, September 23, the Ada County Chair and Treasurer were notified that their appeal would be heard and were given only three days' notice. They decided to provide written testimony, but the IDGOP Executive Committee considered it "inadmissible." The Ada County Chair and Treasurer were not told written testimony would not be a proper form of "being heard" as was guaranteed under the IDGOP State Party rules. No State Party or legal precedence excludes written testimony as a proper form of being "heard." Written testimony has always been admissible.
- During the September 23rd "hearing," the Chair of the IDGOP, Dorothy Moon, presided over the process even though State Rules clearly indicated that the Chair, Dorothy Moon, is to recuse herself from an appeal of her original decision. She was notified that she was required to turn the matter over to another officer multiple times, but she refused.
- During the September 23 IDGOP Executive Committee "hearing," the IDGOP Treasurer Steve Bender (also PC 1408) knowingly divulged privileged conversations from a "confidential Executive Session" held by the Ada County Republican Central Committee on September 22nd and also maligned certain members of the Ada County Republican Executive Team.

- The newly hired State GOP Office Administrator, Laurel Morgan, PC 2008, and one of the complainants, led the charge against Ada County's Chair and Treasurer. This is an obvious conflict of interest.
- An independent audit by a reputable accounting firm has proven there were NO financial improprieties as alleged in the "complaint."

Everything we have mentioned is entirely unacceptable, unethical, bullying, and often hypocritical behavior. But the State Party has come to this: if you are "for the cause," rule-breaking is permitted. Accountability for those "supporting the cause" will never occur, and some members are never expected to live up to the standards they set for others. Those supporting the "cause" coordinate efforts to bring down the Ada County Central Committee instead of pouring all their energy into advancing the Ada County Central Committee's mission of advancing Republican principles, activating the grassroots, and electing Republicans.

It is clear that many of the self-styled "State Party elites" treat other Republicans with utter disdain, and no shortage of bullying, harassment, intimidation, and retribution will be unleashed on those Republicans the State Party wants to purge. In Ada County, false charges, the smashing of due process rights, the violation of State Party rules, and indiscriminate decisions that fly in the face of decades of precedence are all used to accomplish this purging.

For the last few years, Ada County was the most effective battleground County Party in the State. In the past three years, we raised and invested more money, \$260,000, for political races than all other Idaho GOP counties combined. But it seems that certain people in the IDGOP do not like the "type of Republicans" the voters elect in Ada County. These elected Republicans are labeled with unflattering terms. Those doing the labeling describe themselves as "conservatives" or "liberty-oriented" but never use the word Republican.

To those who have spent so many hours fighting against your own Ada County Central Committee, I say, "Congratulations, you have successfully dismantled Idaho's strongest battleground County party." Some of our most dedicated donors will no longer donate and are asking for money back. In 2023, the money we raised to support candidates running for city council and school board seats had to go to State Party dues instead, and at the most critical moment when financial resources are needed. In other words, five key races will not get the funding for the November races. All the energy focused on destroying a highly effective Ada County party could have been used to fight liberals and Democrats across Ada County. But now, Republicans lose while Democrats win.

Today, letters of resignation were tendered by Chairman Victor Miller, First Vice Chair Megan Reichle, Second Vice Chair Travis Clyde, Third Vice Chair Barrett Tetlow, Treasurer Dave Litster, and State Committeewoman Kim Wickstrum, in their capacity as officers, effective immediately. They will retain their seats as Precinct Committeemen and Committeewoman. I, too, am resigning as Ada County Chairman, effective immediately.