



CEI presents first budget to lawmakers

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Aman

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BOISE — The newly created College of Eastern Idaho gave its first presentation Monday at the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee, which writes the state budget.

“This is a true privilege, representing our faculty, our staff, the citizens and voters of Bonneville County,” said CEI President Rick Aman, recently chosen as the community college’s first president.

The State Board of Education and Gov. C.L. “Butch” Otter, a backer of the community college’s creation, each recommended about \$5.2 million in state funding be released to CEI. That’s composed mostly of ongoing funding, and comes in addition to the \$5 million the Legislature had set aside for the creation of the community college before it was overwhelmingly approved by Bonneville County voters.

The funding recommendations include:

- Appropriating \$3.9 million in yearly funding to pay for staff and operating costs associated with expanding CEI’s curriculum. That will fund 72 new positions.
- Transferring about \$1 million in funding from the Career-Technical Education program, previously devoted to Eastern Idaho Technical College, for maintenance and administrative costs.

- Appropriating \$200,000 in annual funding from the state liquor tax to fund administrative services staff. That amount would match the amount sent to each of the other three community colleges in the state each year.

Aman got high praise from a local lawmaker on the committee.

“We are in the presence of nothing short of a miracle worker here,” said Rep. Wendy Horman, R-Idaho Falls. “To take a technical college and move it into a community college in the matter of a few months, with full accreditation, offering an associate degree, truly is nothing short of a miracle.”

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