

Idaho Senator Challenges State's Ethnic-Based Funding, Requests Explanation for Hispanic Commission Allocation

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[Senator Brian Lenney](#)

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BOISE, ID – Idaho State Senator Brian Lenney has formally requested Governor Brad Little provide a written explanation for the state's annual allocation of \$546,400 in taxpayer funding to the Idaho Hispanic Commission while no equivalent recognition exists for residents of Scotch-Irish descent.

In a letter delivered to the Governor's office today, Senator Lenney outlined the historical hardships faced by his Scotch-Irish ancestors, including indentured servitude that spanned from the 1620s through 1775 across multiple colonies. The senator detailed harsh working conditions in Pennsylvania coal mines where life expectancy averaged 40 to 50 years, Virginia tobacco plantations where two-thirds of indentured servants died within months of arrival, and Carolina turpentine camps that federal inspectors once described as a "human slaughter pen."

"My ancestors received zero reparations, zero land grants, and zero acknowledgment from any government entity at any level," Senator Lenney wrote. "The policy was straightforward: sign a seven-year indenture contract and hope to survive it."

Senator Lenney's letter requests that the Governor's office provide the selection criteria used to determine which ethnic groups receive state funding and formal recognition. As an alternative, he suggests the state could eliminate all ethnicity-based funding and classify residents exclusively as Idahoans on government forms, regardless of ancestral background.

The senator has requested a written response from the Governor's office by December 15, 2025.

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