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## **Maintaining Idaho’s Rule of Law: Chief Justice Speaks to Legislature**

The mission of Idaho’s courts may look simple: to provide a fair and peaceful way to resolve disputes. But the way it does so, under an equal rule of law, is fundamental to our society.

Chief Justice G. Richard Bevan spoke on that concept today while delivering his annual State of the Judiciary address. He focused his remarks on the Judicial Branch’s continual efforts to support the rule of law both in and out of this state’s courtrooms.

“Our branch is the embodiment of the American ideal that everyone answers to the law and answers equally,” Chief Justice Bevan said.

The yearly speech to the Legislature discusses the role of the courts, significant Judicial Branch projects and other matters important to maintaining this state’s fair, timely and impartial court system. The text of today’s speech is now posted at [isc.idaho.gov](https://isc.idaho.gov). A recording will be published when available at [annualreport.isc.idaho.gov](https://annualreport.isc.idaho.gov).

Chief Justice Bevan described Judicial Branch efforts to improve support for jurors and for court users — who include not only the many people filing and responding to cases within Idaho’s state courts, but also users of court systems like the iCourt Portal that provides case information.

He discussed the importance of stable funding for court technology, given the role of such technology in providing modern access to justice. The Idaho Supreme Court is making changes to its hosting and delivery of technology services to improve security and support, and this session proposes state general fund dollars to ensure those services are properly maintained going forward.

Chief Justice Bevan called again for providing a fairer wage for judges that reflects their education and expertise. “Idahoans deserve judges who are at the prime of their careers and at the top of their game,” he said. “But we don’t get there by making judicial service painful and undercompensated.”

To run one of Idaho's three branches of government, the Supreme Court's 2024 budget proposal amounts to a little more than 1% of current general fund expenditures.

This was Chief Justice Bevan's fourth State of the Judiciary address, each of which focused on cooperation across state government to benefit Idahoans.

"Each year during these remarks, I have shared my strong belief that working together, our branches can truly improve life for the people of this state," he said today. "The power to keep Idaho exceptional lies with us."

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