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## Idaho State Senate

### **SENATOR EDGAR J. MALEPEAI** **SENATE MINORITY LEADER**

For immediate release - Wednesday, February 29, 2012

#### **Senate Minority Leader Edgar J. Malepeai will not seek a sixth term in the legislature**

**BOISE** – After five terms representing ten years of legislative service, Senator Edgar J. Malepeai has decided not to run for office in 2012. Of this difficult decision, the senator said, "I have cherished my time in the Idaho Senate serving the people of Bannock County and fighting for all Idahoans who value education, our unique quality of life and the importance of minority representation in Idaho."

For the past two years, Senator Malepeai has served as leader of the Senate Minority Office. "My guiding principal through all my years of service has been to respond to the needs of my constituents by giving a voice to issues that all too often go unaddressed," said Malepeai. In addition to his leadership role, Senator Malepeai has served on State Affairs, Commerce & Human Resources and the Governor's Transportation Task Force. But his greatest contribution to the state has been as a fierce champion of appropriate school funding as a member of the Senate Education Committee.

A life-long educator, Malepeai retired in 2011 after 36 years in the field; six as the Director of Idaho State University's Upward Bound Program and 30 teaching high school government classes in Pocatello/Chubbuck School District 25. He launched his college career as a star football player and credits his success to the opportunities a football scholarship afforded him in pursuing higher education. His love of team sports has been a driving force in his approach to public service and his colleagues respect him as a consensus builder who believes that legislation must be a team effort if the best outcome for all of Idaho's citizens is to be achieved. "I was deeply disappointed in the Luna Laws of 2011 which represented an unwarranted attack on Idaho's dedicated teachers but, more importantly, because they were crafted with no input from the very people who had the most at stake: educators, parents and students," Malepeai recalled.

Senator Malepeai came into the 2012 session confident that this would be the year Idaho finally added protections for sexual orientation and gender identity to the existing Human Rights Act. Sadly, after sponsoring this legislation with a compelling, emotional plea to his fellow members of Senate State Affairs, the committee summarily refused to even print the bill. "I wanted very much to allow my fellow Idahoans who experience discrimination simply for being themselves to have a chance to bring their stories into this building so that others might understand the overwhelming need to extend the basic protections too many of us take for granted," he said.

As the father of three and grandfather to two infants, Senator Malepeai plans to travel and spend more time with his family in the role of doting granddad as well as remaining active in Pocatello. He concluded, "I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to serve District 30 in the Idaho Legislature and to all who've supported me, encouraged me, and befriended me, I say thank you."

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