

Idaho Democratic Party

For Immediate Release

Date: May 13, 2015

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Special Session: Idahoans Fed Up with Dishonest Distractions

BY Idaho Democratic Party Chairman Larry Kenck

Post Falls, Idaho—The "You Just Can't Make This Stuff Up" Caucus is scrambling to justify the blunder that threatened \$205 million in child support for Idaho kids.

That recklessness ended a legislative session that featured a spree of bizarre antics: Rep. Vito Barbieri and his weird misunderstanding of female anatomy, the House State Affairs committee getting spooked by an 8th grader trying to designate a “creepy” state amphibian, and Rep. Paul Shepherd cheerfully comparing gay people to slave owners.

Of course, the final fumble hurt the livelihoods of Idaho’s most vulnerable kids. That one has GOP politicians in crisis mode trying to repair their public images—*We didn't do what you think that we did. We did what we want you to think that we did.*

Rep. Lynn Luker, a West Boise politician was a ring-leader for nine House committee members who killed the child support enforcement bill. He’s looking over his shoulder at Boise businessman Steve Berch who won over 48 percent against him in 2014. Luker claims that he has grand amendments to make the bill better—a claim disputed by Senate President Pro Tem Brent Hill, who says: "he didn't think the amendments were necessary."(Idaho Politics Weekly)

Berch told [Idaho Politics Weekly](#) that Luker is putting a smiley face on a bad decision:

“He had to come up with meaningless amendments to create the perception that something was being fixed,” Berch said. “I don’t think he’s fixing anything other than his reputation.”

In his defense, Luker says what most Idaho GOP politicians say when they are under scrutiny—some Democrat in Congress is the real villain here:

"Nancy Pelosi might say, 'read it and figure out what's in it later,'" Luker said. "I don't work that way."

Basically, Luker is saying, "Nancy made me do it." Wow. That is spooky.

Now, nationalizing local and state elections is a recipe that has elevated many low quality GOP politicians over the past couple decades. In fact, Luker's 2012 running mate, now a disgraced former Representative ran—and won—using that formula.

Former GOP Rep. Mark Patterson refused to answer questions about his history or positions in 2012. Patterson did, however, send lots of campaign mail attacking the President of the United States and the U.S. Congress. He won! In 2013, Patterson resigned after his secret history surfaced, a history that included rape charges in multiple states.

That strategy of distracting voters with national issues worked for Patterson, one of the most unappealing candidates, ever. So, why wouldn't Luker bank on it to work for him? The bad news for Luker is this: the trend is tracking away from that kind of politicking. Idahoans are fed up with broken promises and dishonest distractions.

As to child support in Idaho, Luker and his peers broke it and the public demands that they fix it. We know that. We won't thank them for their vigilance against cockeyed conspiracy theories. We know that a few GOP politicians are costing us \$40,000 for a special legislative session that we didn't need to have—no thanks.

We know who to hold to account—that accountability comes at the 2016 ballot box.

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