

## 2019 Wyoming League of Women Voters Legislative Report #2

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The House Corporations voted 3-4 on HB36, a bill the county clerks had favored to allow mail ballots for regular elections, not just absentee or special election voting. Arguments from opponents included:

- Voting before Election Day lacks enough information.
- You can't trust the mail.
- Everyone should have to go to the polls
- Opportunity for fraud (even though clerks testified to the success of current mail voting)
- Reference to problems in one county in Florida
- A "benefit" cited by the clerks was increased election participation, but one committee member indicated that was not necessarily a good thing.

The appropriations trend is to dictate hiring and programs of Executive agencies. There is a proposed amendment to require legislative confirmation of Supreme Court justices. There is a bill to require legislative approval for land exchanges worked out between the feds and Board of Land Commissioners. Two bills filed for this session would force voters to pledge adherence to a political party early in an election season, before they even knew who would be on the ballot (despite LWV's admonition to "be informed and vote"). Changing parties to vote for the person is considered "mischief."

Note a proposed amendment to remove the 2/3 introduction vote requirement for non-budget bills in budget sessions, by Speaker Steve Harshman. The Management Council (legislative leaders) discussed how to make sessions run more efficiently, and this was one suggestion. Another was to even the days in the budget and general sessions (30-30). Neither won committee support.

Attached is a list of bills that touch on League of Women Voters issues. There is another week of Senate bill filing and two weeks for the House, so the list will get a lot longer before votes and the calendar winnow them substantially. Watch for a bill to repeal capital punishment. LWVWY has joined this effort with a remarkably diverse group. Also watch for a bill to raise tobacco taxes by \$1/pack, another LWV issue. There is rumor of a Medicaid Expansion bill to come, as well.

Go to the Legislative Service Office Website [www.wyoleg.gov](http://www.wyoleg.gov) to read all the bills and their status, about the legislators and leadership and the calendars for committees and floor action. All floor debate is streamed and archived. Appropriations meetings are streamed and recorded, as well. Audio links are on [wyoleg.gov](http://wyoleg.gov). The Legislature will return to the State Capitol for the 2020 session, where committee rooms will be large and accommodating, and all will be wired for streaming.

The Management Council has scheduled 35 days for the 2019 session. Monday is day number 4. The first big deadline is Feb. 1 for bills to be out of the house of origin. The next day it must clear General File (initial debate). Majority floor leaders set the debate schedules. Adjournment is Feb. 27.

Find info on how to contact legislators by clicking on the "Citizen Engagement" tab at the top of the home page of [wyoleg.gov](http://wyoleg.gov). Then click on "Contacting a Legislator." Lots of information on that tab is about attending a session. Of course, a personal visit is the most effective, if you can make it. Please contact me if you have questions about bills, meetings or issues navigating [wyoleg.gov](http://wyoleg.gov).