

League of Women Voters of Wyoming
2020 Wyoming Legislature Reports
#1 – Preview Bill Summary Feb. 8, 2020
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Elections

HB26 – Tribal ID for voting (Joint Corporations)
Establishes tribal ID requirements to be used to register to vote.

HB86 - Removal of elected municipal officials (Rep. Loucks, R-Casper)
Establishes a mechanism to remove and replace elected official “in any form of municipal government.”

SF20 – Election Code amendments (Joint Corporations)
Among provisions: people may receive absentee ballots by email, no one needs to show an ID at the polls who has produced the ID to register to vote, and ballots must be prepared 45 days before an election (rather than 40) to allow remote voters to get them back to the county clerk in time.

SF56 – Absentee polling places (Sen. Case, R-Lander)
Allows county clerks to set up a “satellite” polling place (besides courthouse) for early voting.

Education

HB40 – School Finance Model recalibration (Joint Education)
Sets up a legislative task force (6 senators, 6 reps) to take the work of consultants (already hired and already at work) and make sure school funding model is cost based. Will report to Legislature by Jan. 1. Educators worry it might be primarily a mechanism to cut funding. LWV will ask that all task force meetings are streams and archived.

HB83 – UW Board of Trustees -selection by electorate (Rep. Gray, R-Casper)
Governor would make appointments for each opening from between two candidates chosen by voters.

Revenue

HB33 – Agricultural land qualification (Joint Revenue)
Ag land production must be at least \$3,000/year (instead of \$500) to qualify for the ag property tax rate. Would raise an additional \$350,000 for the School Foundation Account.

HB41 – Local Sales and use Tax (Joint Revenue)
Would make it easier for a county to put 5th penny tax on the ballot (requiring half of governing bodies, down from 2/3). When renewing, county can ask voters if they want it make it permanent.

HB63 – Fuel tax (Joint Revenue)

Will raise gasoline tax from 24 cents to 27 cents per gallon, to raise \$2.5 million a year for highways, for county roads, for towns/cities streets/allies and for state parks.

HB64 – National Corporate Tax recapture (Joint Revenue)

Creates the National Corporate Tax Recapture Act, imposing a 7 percent franchise tax on income earned in Wyoming by incorporated business with more than 100 shareholders and required to file IRS Form 1120. Expected to raise \$23 million a year.

HB71 – Wyoming public safety communications system funding (Joint Transportation)

Establishes a statewide service charge of 50 cents on retail sales of prepaid wireless communication access in Wyoming. It would raise \$3.2 million in a new Public Safety Systems Account and \$33,000 to the General Fund.

HB73 – Nicotine products – taxation (Joint Revenue)

Adds e-cigarettes to the nicotine taxation system for the state, imposing tax if 14 percent of wholesale purchase price. (No estimate on revenue generated.)

SF6 – Tolling authority for I-80 (Joint Transportation)

Creates a tolling program by the Wyoming Transportation Commission. A setup cost of \$1.2 million would come from the Highway Fund.

Government

HB4 – Wyoming coal marketing program (Joint Minerals)

Sets up a \$1 million coal marketing program in the governor’s office.

HB22 – Town and county development regulations (Joint Corporations)

With echoes of last year’s overriding of Teton County land use regulation in order to benefit a private group – this would prohibit any “regulation, ordinance, resolution, condition of development, comprehensive plan or subdivision plan” that required allocation of units for affordable or workforce housing.

HB31 – Criminal Justice-Mental health-substance abuse program. (Joint Labor)

Requires Departments of Health and Corrections to collaborate to reduce criminal offender recidivism by improving mental health and substance use programming and funding. It creates a unit in DOC for this program. Creates 3 positions and appropriates \$648,760 for the biennium.

HB54 – State Officials Salary (Joint Appropriations)

Raises annual salary for governor from \$105,000 to \$150,000. Raises annual salary for other four top elected from \$92,000 to \$120,000. Starts 2022. Costs an extra \$96,000 a year.

HB62 – Senior Health Care Special District (Joint Labor)

Creates special districts, with taxing and bonding authority, to set up senior health care facilities

SF9 – Ethics and Disclosure Act Amendments (Joint Judiciary)

This would extend requirements of the state Ethics and Disclosure Act to local governments and additional state employees.

SF69 – Rural health care district authority (Sen. Baldwin, R-Kemmerer)

Creates authority to own and operate a nursing home.

HB75 – Medicaid expansion authorization (Joint Revenue)

Departments of Insurance and Health work together and with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on options to extend Medicaid to low-income adults, and governor is authorized to work out an agreement with CMS and bring back to the Legislature by Jan 1, 2022.

HB67 – Child marriage restriction (Rep. Pelkey, D-Laramie)

This would raise the minimum age of consent to marry from 16 to 18 years old.

HB97 – Omnibus water bill-construction (Select Water Committee)

Uses about \$95 million from various water development accounts to plan, design and build water development projects in Wyoming.

HB108 – Ban on sanctuary cities and counties (Rep. Gray, R-Casper)

Bans implementation of immigration sanctuary policies by cities, towns and counties in Wyoming.

SF59 – Per diem rates (Management Council)

Increases the per diem rates for legislators from \$109 to \$151, which then will be adjusted every July 1 by the state auditor to an amount equal to the most recent standards per diem rate established by the U.S. General Services Administration for travel in Wyoming. Appropriates \$500,000 from the General Fund to the Management Council and another \$50,000 to the auditor.

SF70 – Government abuse, fraud and waste reporting (Sen. James, R-Rock Springs)

Sets up a reporting system in the state auditor's office for the public to report government abuse, fraud and waste

SF80 – Handgun purchase (Sen. Rothfuss-D-Laramie)

Creates a 3-day waiting period for purchase of a handgun.

SF88 – Repeal gun free zones and preemption amendments (Sen. Bouchard, R-Cheyenne)

Repeals gun free zones and "clarifies" that only the Legislature may regular firearms, weapons and ammo.

HB121 – Legislative committees – interim topics (Rep. Jennings, R-Sheridan)

This is a particularly worrisome proposal – to let joint interim committees take on whatever work they want to, without permission from the Management Council. The fiscal note says the impact is "indeterminable." I'll say.

Constitutional Amendments

HJ1 – State Land-mineral royalties (Rep. Hallinan, R-Gillette)

Would amend the Wyoming Constitution so that the Legislature could divert all of mineral income of school trust lands away from the Permanent Land Fund and into a spending account. This would seem to have the same problem as a similar Arizona amendment, which failed to get the permission of Congress to violate its Act of Admission.

HJ2 – Taxpayer bill of rights (Rep. Gray, R-Casper)

Would amend the Wyoming Constitution by creating a new section prohibiting any tax increase by the state or local government or increase of debt unless approved by the voters. Also provides for distribution of “surplus state funds.”

SJ2 – General session appropriations – constitutional amendment (Sen. James, R-Rock Springs)

Would amend the Wyoming Constitution by limiting spending that could be made in the so-called “supplementary appropriations bill” during non-budget sessions.