

LWVWY Legislative Report #1  
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This first report of the 2021 session is more of a roadmap, because the session is unlike any other to accommodate the need to proceed with some virtual business but also postpone action with the most public involvement until a time (we hope) it will be okay to meet in person in the State Capitol. This is the first half of the 66<sup>th</sup> Legislature, which includes a General Session in 2021 and a Budget Session in 2022.

The 2021 General Session Schedule is attached here and also is available on the Legislative Service Office Website – along with almost every other legislative-related information that will be useful this session. The session officially convened Jan. 12 with a one-day session to elect and swear in leadership, adopt rules, hear from Gov. Mark Gordon, introduce some interim committee bills and then adjourn until Jan. 27.

Next: The Management Council meets Jan. 18 to organize its own membership of legislative leaders for the next two years, consider draft legislation and consider interim committee assignments (which usually happens at the close of a session.)

Jan. 19-21 standing committees meet (virtually) to take testimony and put final touches on bills they wrote in the interim. The bills are on the LSO Website under “2021 General Session bills.” This committee work will not count against the 40 days technically available to the session.

Days 2-3 of the session are Jan. 27-28 to work the aforementioned committee bills, which then are sent to the other chamber. By Feb. 5, work on those bills is done. During the week of Feb. 22, there can be some committee work on other bills.

Then a break.

Then reconvening March 1, in person as much as allowable. The weeks of March 8 and March 15 are promised to the Budget Bill. Yes, a Budget Bill in a general session, because the budget written last year has been completely reworked to reduce spending by at least 10 percent. Deadlines for action in each chamber start falling March 17. Adjournment is April 2.

Leadership wants this session to be as paperless as possible, for both members and the public, so we all will have to become familiar with the LSO Website to find documents and bill information and to participate in the legislative process. That will require decent connectivity, too. If you have any questions about accessing meetings, streaming video, documents or other information, please contact me.

Legislation of keenest interest to the Wyoming League, at least so far, will be any proposals that would suppress voting and the two individually-sponsored measures that we previously supported and expect to see again to expand Medicaid and to repeal the death penalty. The Legislature also will receive 2020 Census data and make a plan for the interim to redraw election district lines to ensure roughly equal number of people in each district. That is absolutely necessary to ensure proportional representation – “one person, one vote.” House Speaker Eric Barlow assures us they will get to the interim redistricting plan during this session, which will require close working with county clerks.

The House and Senate and their committees have new leadership and members, which I have summarized on one page and is attached here. Biographical and contact information on all legislators is available on the LSO Website.

So, how do you “attend” a virtual session or meeting? You get a link to watch the event streamed on the Legislature’s YouTube channel. However, if you think you might want to testify before a committee, you actually have to join the committee on the Zoom platform the Legislature is using. You don’t have to install the Zoom app on your device, but it helps (and it’s free). You are kept in a virtual “waiting room” and then are brought into the meeting by LSO. Find links on the LSO home page to “Watch Live” or check out a meeting on the “Committee Meeting Schedule.” The committee meetings have links on the left side of the computer screen for agenda information and to testify.

The LSO’s guide to the Legislature has much useful information, found at <https://wyoleg.gov/docs/CitizenGuidebook.pdf>.

Attached to this report is:

- A preview of bills filed so far for the 2021 session
- The 2021 General Session Schedule
- Summary of leadership and committee assignments

If you have any questions about using the LSO Website or how to participate in the legislative process, please email me at [marguerite.herman@gmail.com](mailto:marguerite.herman@gmail.com).