

LWVWY Legislative Report #5  
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By Marguerite Herman, lobbyist  
[Marguerite.herman@gmail.com](mailto:Marguerite.herman@gmail.com)  
307-630-8095 (cell)  
LSO Website [www.wyoleg.gov](http://www.wyoleg.gov).

Wyoming legislators filed a few more bills to restrict health officials and cement gun rights in the first week of the winter break, and we enter a quiet week where lobbyists and citizen advocates can approach lawmakers at home before they come to Cheyenne. That will be March 1, according to the Management Council schedule. (Please, no jokes about March madness.)

This gives advocates a week to prepare for the schedule of committee meetings on Feb. 23, Feb. 24 and Feb. 25. Meetings are listed on the LSO Website [wyoleg.gov](http://wyoleg.gov) by the day. Check committee meetings and agendas of bills for each day. The listing includes a Zoom link. These meetings will result in a list of bills for the General Files of the House and Senate, ready to go on March 1. This includes the voter suppression proposal **HB75 Voter fraud-prevention**, scheduled for House Corporations on Feb. 24.

Other bills of particular interest Feb. 23-25 include:

Feb. 23	Senate Revenue,	SJ1 Taxes to voters constitutional amendment
Feb. 24	House Minerals,	HB7 Air ambulance membership organizations-regulations
Feb. 25	House Education	HB61 School finance recalibration HB89 School finance amendments
	Senate Education	HB51 School finance recalibration presentation SF83 Gillette college community college district
	House Judiciary	HB103 Journalists-privileged communication
Feb. 26	Nothing scheduled so far, but that could change.	

Note: Each committee meeting notice has a link to watch live or recorded streaming on YouTube. If you want to testify, there is a separate link to register to join the meeting live on Zoom. It helps if you have the Zoom app on your device (download is free) and if you have a stable Internet connection. For each meeting, click on “details” for committee members and other information. Click “testify” if you want to join on Zoom to testify.

LWVWY has an established position to oppose the false premise of **HB75** that Wyoming elections need voter ID to prevent impersonations. (Government-issued IDs are required for registration, and in that process the county clerks check official databases to verify qualifications.) You may join me in testifying against **HB75** at the meeting, and you should personally contact members of House Corporations and any of the 55 bill sponsors in your district and county. This is a partisan power move with one effect, which is to deter participation of people in their government. Some changes from previous versions of this legislation include making qualifying IDs easier to get, but that still fails to address the dubious need for another obstacle. Other groups who oppose this change include the county clerks and the Equality State Policy Center. The clerks and their knowledge and experience provide the best challenge. You might check if your local clerk plans to testify.

House and Senate Education committees are meeting simultaneously Feb. 24 on the school formula recalibration proposal that emerged from an intensive interim study. While the Senate committee will get a briefing, the House committee actually will start working the bill, beginning with an explanation and testimony. You can watch either (or both) recordings later, but if you wanted to testify on the proposal, this would be the opportunity in House Education. The schedule says the sponsors of the competing proposal, **HB89**, may offer it as an “amendment” to **HB61**. **HB89** represents the worst of the process, reflecting none of the deliberation by the Recalibration Committee. Check with your local district on how the cuts would affect your schools.

LWVWY has not previously testified on school finance proposals, except to support actions that comply with the Wyoming Constitution to finance a complete and uniform education in Wyoming and to raise revenue for that duty, if previously reliable revenue streams dry up (as they have). Proponents for deep, debilitating cuts argue incorrectly that schools have not started cutting (they have) and that residents of the state desire low tax rates more than they support sustainable school budgets.

I am attaching with this report an LSO analysis of Wyoming’s “taxing capacity,” comparing our unused ability to raise revenue compared to other Western states.

Find contact information for legislators on [wyoleg.gov](http://wyoleg.gov), home page, heading “Legislators.”

The mirror 2021 budget revision proposals, HB1 and SF1, haven’t been officially referred to the House and Senate Appropriations committees, which will be the first stop on their way to being scrutinized, debated and amended. If you have an interest in any of the cuts proposed by the interim Joint Appropriations Committee, now is the time to advocate for restoration and perhaps a concurrent move to raise revenue.

There is no Medicaid expansion bill yet, but be aware that the continuing resolution in Congress includes a provision to increase the federal match back up to 95 percent to lure Wyoming and other holdouts to expand Medicaid in their states to low-wage adults. The match 10 years ago started at 100 percent and has since stepped down to 90 percent, still a good deal but not enough to lure the Wyoming Legislature to extend the health care to low-wage workers and the newly pandemic unemployed. LWVWY is working with the Healthy Wyoming coalition, which has background materials, advocacy messaging and county-based groups to help lobby lawmakers. Contact for Healthy Wyoming is Anastasia Marchese at [anastasia@equalitystate.org](mailto:anastasia@equalitystate.org).

As always, if you have any questions about finding meetings, documents or other aspects of the legislative process, please contact me. Margaret Brown also is eager to help people use the LSO Website. If you plan to attend any part of the session in person I will be glad to help, as well.

You can stream the House and Senate sessions live, or watch recorded versions later, with links provided on the LSO Website, attached to the legislative meeting notice.

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