

2022 Wyoming Legislature
League of Women Voters of Wyoming
Bill Summary as of 2-13-22
(Bills dead for this session in red type.)

ELECTIONS/GOVERNANCE

HB26 – Dual public employment and office holding **Rep. Bill Fortner, R-Gillette**

Restricts public employees from holding elected public office, ostensibly because there would be self-interest in some legislation. *Did not consider for introduction.*

HB49 – Election reporting requirements **Joint Corporations**

This greatly expands the kind of activity that requires a financial report. It would include organizations that receives contributions or spends more than \$1,000 to financing an electioneering communication, even if it purports to be an “independent” expenditure. It would include organizations that support or oppose a ballot issue. The meat of the bill is in the definitions. *Approved in House Corps, on General File.*

HB52 Timeline to prepare and process absentee ballots **Joint Corporations**

Authorizes the preparation and proessing aof absentee ballots before an election. This absolutely essential for county clerks to open absentee ballots and have them ready for counting on election day, to prevent delays in announcing winners and enable counting to be completed to meet canvassing deadlines. *Approved House Corps, on General File.*

HB57 Citizen actions to compel financial reporting compliance **Management Audit Commi**

This would authorize residents in a jurisdiction – city, county, town, special district or other entity – to institute a mandamus action to disclose compliance with financial reporting requirements. If the action wins judgment, the jurisdiction pays attorneys’ fees. *Did not consider for introduction*

HB60 Fiscal training and enforcement of financial reporting laws **Management Audit Committee**
State grants and loans would be conditioned on financial reporting as required by law. Funds woud be withheld otherwise. It applies to state agencies and boards of every county, city or town. *In House Corporations.*

HB74 Runoff Elections **Rep. Chip Neiman, R-Hulett**

Requires a top-2 runoff if no Primary candidate emerges with more than 50 percent of the votes. The bill moves the Primary from Tuesday after 3rd Monday in August to Tuesday after first Monday in May. Runoff moved to Tuesday after the 2nd Monday in August. This would arguably give election officials time to complete nominations before the General Election. Bond elections would no longer be tied to primaries. Juggles reporting schedules to make it work. *Did not consider for introduction.*

HB80 Campaign Reports **Joint Corporations**

All campaigns and political action committees must file an itemized statement of contributions and expenditures, whether the funds have been spent or not. *Third reading Monday*

HB142 Vacancies in elected office **Rep. Steve Harshman, R-Casper**

This would fill vacancies with special elections, instead of the current process of sending candidate names to the governor for appointment until the next regular election. *Narrowly failed introduction 39-21.*

HB152 Removal of political parties from elections **Rep. Mike Yin, D- Jackson**

This would open election primaries to all without regard to party affiliation. “Any voter could vote for any candidate.” *Failed introduction 14-46.*

SF25 and SF26 District judge positions-authorization Joint Judiciary Committee
Authorizes additional judges in 3rd, 6th and 7th judicial districts. (3rd district is Lincoln, Sweetwater and Uinta counties.) 6th is Campbell, Crook and Weston counties. 7th is Natrona County. They can hire judge and staff when the facilities are ready. Deemed necessary to provide access to justice. *SF25 on 3rd reading in Senate, SF26 in Senate Appropriations.*

HB100 – Redistricting of the Legislature Joint Corporations Committee
Joint Corporations-approved plan for 62 House Districts and 31 Senate District. Includes designation of two-HD combos for each SD. Find background and proposed maps on the LSO Website – click link at top of home page. Expect floor amendments to protect county-level interests. *Amended to accommodate regional complaints and approved by House. On to the Senate.*

SF60 Redistricting of the Legislature – 2 Se. Charles Scott, R-Casper
Sen. Scott’s alternate plan that maintains 60 House Districts and 30 Senate Districts. *In Senate Rules, where leadership has lots of discretion to schedule, move, adjust, etc.*

SF49 Repeal of specified state boards and commissions Management Audit
Repeals: Palliative Care Advisory Council, Governor’s Food Safety Council, Division of Advisory Committees on Underground Water, Health Benefits plan committee, State Employee Compensation Commission and Wyoming Public Television Council. *2nd reading Monday in Senate. 2nd reading in Senate Monday.*

SF50 Government waste, fraud, abuse and whistleblower protection Rep. Tom James, R-Green River
Department of Audit would define and set up an anonymous reporting system for governmental waste, fraud and abuse. Detailed instructions on handling and consequences of reports and firing of guilty employees. Defines “abuse” as improper use of government property. “Fraud” defined as wrongful deception intended to result in financial or personal gain, including false representation of fact or concealment of information. “Waste” includes incurring unnecessary costs resulting from inefficient or ineffective practices, systems or controls. *Introduced 20-10, considered in Senate Corporations on Tuesday.*

SF58 Wyoming Council for Women’s Issues-workforce services Joint Appropriations Committee
This would place the council within the Department of Workforce Services. *Did not consider for intro.*

SF79 Prohibition on private funds for conducting elections Sen. Cheri Steinmetz, R-Lingle
Prohibits election officials from using donations to register voters. May use private funds to train election workers. *Introduced 30-0 and assigned to Senate Corporations.*

SF107 Attorney General – elected official Sen. Anthony Bouchard, R-Cheyenne
Sponsor says it would make the AG more accountable to Legislature. Currently, AG is appointed by the governor. *Failed introduction 13-17*

EDUCATION

SF103 Education-Limitations on teaching critical race theory Sen. Troy McKeown, R-Gillette
Bill was amended in Senate Education to prohibit the teaching of hate and division on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, religion, color or national origin. Our new education superintendent said CRT is hard to define, but you know it when you see it. *On General File.*

HB30 School finance – increasing cash reserves Joint Education
Raises the amount of reserves a school district may maintain from 15 percent of the total foundation program amount to 30 percent, through FY26. It would prohibit expenditures on capital construction. *3rd reading in House.*

HB58 Constitutional instructional and examination requirements **Rep. Dan Laursen, R-Powell**
Would require schools to instruct students about the US Constitution, especially the Bill of Rights, and also make sure students pass a short-answer citizenship test. *Did not consider.*

HB97 – Ban on teaching and training critical race theory **Rep. Chuck Gray, R-Casper**
Note co-sponsors: Reps. Bear, Haroldson, Heiner, Jennings, Laursen, Neiman and Winter and Sens. French and McKeown. Prohibits use of public funds “for instruction that presents any form of blame or judgment on the basis of race, ethnicity, sex, color or national origin.” *Failed introduction 35-24-1.*

SF32 K-3reading assessment and intervention program Joint Education Committee
This would require districts to screen students K-3 four times a year for “dyslexia and other reading difficulties” and report results to parents. Also requires professional development of teachers K-3 on reading. \$300,000 is appropriated for districts. Questionable whether quarterly testing is a good idea. *Senate General File.*

SF62 Civics Transparency Act Sen. Ogden Driskill, R-Sundance
All school districts must publish on their Websites all materials and activities and all policies for selecting those materials and activities. Also direct districts to teach about slavery, race based discrimination and U.S. efforts to end discrimination. No mention of State Board of Education and its authority to set standards. *In Senate Education Monday morning.*

SF63 County offices open to the public Sen. Cale Case, R-Lander
Removes county commission’s authority to close offices on days other than weekends and holidays. *In Senate Corporations.*

REVENUE/FISCAL

HB8 – Scratch tickets-outdoor recreation funding **Joint Travel**
Would raise an estimated \$700,000 a year for the State Parks and Cultural Resources, as appropriated by Legislature. *Failed introduction 32-28.*

SF2 Legislative budget Management Council
\$23 million is appropriated for the Legislature for the next biennium. Read the fiscal note for details. Unassigned yet.

HB96 – State officials salary Rep. Bob Nicholas, R-Cheyenne
This would raise annual salaries after the 2022 elections: Governor from \$105,000 to \$140,000 and the other top elected officials from \$92,000 to \$125,000. *On House General File.*

HB14 – Fuel Tax **Joint Transportation**
Raises tax on gasoline, diesel and alternative fuel by 5 cents per gallon, equal to 28 cents per gallon in FY 2023, 10 cents per gallon FY 2024 and 15 cents per gallon FY 2025. Revenue goes by formula to Highway Fund, cities/ towns street and alley, county roads and state parks. Gasoline and diesel will use existing distribution

Appropriates \$7 million in American Rescue Plan Act federal funds for broadband access projects and telehealth access projects. Local governments provide one or more public access points for wireless internet access. Wyoming Business Council would establish a program to provide grants for local governmental entities to complete broadband internet access projects in Wyoming cities, towns and counties. Grants to local govts to enter maximum 5 year contracts for a max \$20,000 with commercial enterprises. Intended to target the unserved, economically disadvantaged population. *Did not consider.*

HB69 Broadband development – amendments and programs **Select Block Chain/Technology**

Authorize \$1.5 million annually from broadband development subaccount to local governments to match grants for projects to improve broadband internet access or opportunities for improving access for Wyoming residents. Also for telehealth purposes for Wyoming residents and businesses. *Did not consider.*

SF36 Pharmacy benefit managers act enhancements

Joint Labor Committee

Greatly increases restrictions and regulation of Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBMs) n BMs by the Department of Insurance, at the request of independent pharmacies. Increases DoI staff by 2 and spends \$250,000 to train rest of staff on how to handle PBM complaints. Will need more funding if more than 200 complaints a year. Previous legislation created PBM licensure by the state. This is the follow-up with further regulation, including prohibition of pricing practices that squeeze the pharmacies and restricting audits by PBMs of pharmacies. This bill needs work to patch holes and definitions. *Senate Labor approved 3-2, and it's on General File.*

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

HJ1 Supreme court justices and district judges retirement – Joint Judiciary Committee

Retirement age raised from 70 to 75. *On House General File.*

HJ3 Runoff elections-constitutional amendment

Rep. Chip Neiman, R-Hulett

To make the runoff elections work in redistricting years, this would move up th Legislature's redistricting effort every 10 years. Currently, the Legislature redistricts during the budget session after census numbers are released. This amendment would create authority for a special session in December before the budget session. *Failed introduction 29-30-1.*

HJ4 Budget sessions – bill introduction

Rep. Steve Harshman, R-Casper

Repeals introductory vote requirement for bills in a budget session. *Did not consider.*

SJ1 Redistricting Commission

Rep. Mike Gierau, D-Jackson

Proposes to amend the Wyoming Constitution to implement a redistricting commission to be responsible for apportioning legislative districts based on decennial census of the United States. Work would take place within 90 days of release of Census data. Commission would be five people named without regard to political affiliation. *Failed introduction 9-21.*

SJ2 Senior Citizen Property Tax Relief

Sen. Dan Dockstader

Proposes to amend the Wyoming Constitution to give a tax exemption of 50 percent of the first \$200,000 of the fair market value of a home, if the homeowner or spouse is 65 years old or older and has owned the house for at least 10 years. Introduced 24-4-1 and sent to Senate Revenue. *LSO doesn't include fiscal note.*