

2022 Wyoming Legislature

League of Women Voters of Wyoming

Bill Summary #3 as of 2-27-22 (Bills that have died in past week in red text.)

ELECTIONS/GOVERNANCE

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. ***Passed House 45-14-1. In Senate Corporations.***

HB52 Timeline to prepare and process absentee ballots Joint Corporations

Authorizes the preparation and processing of 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. ***Passed House 46-13-1. In Senate Corporations.***

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 would be withheld otherwise. It applies to state agencies and boards of every county, city or town. ***3rd reading in House.***

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. ***Passed House 41-15-4. In Senate Corporations.***

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. ***Senate passed SF25 28-2 and SF26 30-0. In House Judiciary Monday morning.***

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. ***On Senate General File.***

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. ***Was not reported out of Senate Rules by deadline, so will not be considered.***

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. ***Senate passed 28-1-1. In House Corporations.***

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. ***Senate Corporations approved 5-0.3rd reading Monday.***

SF58 Wyoming Council for Women’s Issues-workforce services Joint Appropriations Committee
This would place the council within the Department of Workforce Services. CORRECTION: Previous summary listed as dead for the session, but it is very much alive. ***Senate approved 30-0. House Appropriations approved 7-0, and it’s on General File in the House.***

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. ***Senate Corporations and Appropriations approved 5-0. On General File.***

SF97 Change in Party Affiliation Sen. Bo Biteman, R-Sheridan
This bill would prohibit people from changing party affiliation once candidate filing began for the primary – so for about three months and before voters knew who was running. LWV opposes this strenuously as an intolerable restriction of access to the ballot box, based solely on the assertion by the state GOP Central Committee that object to participation by anyone but the party faithful to select GOP nominees. ***The bill was heard in Senate Agriculture Committee to assure its approval. Senate passed 18-12.***

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. Heavily amended in committee and on Senate floor. Be sure to read engrossed version, as heads to House. ***Senate passed 25-4-1. Sent to House.***

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. ***Passed House 46-10-4. In Senate Education.***

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 passed 21-8-1. In House Education.***

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. **3rd reading in Senate Monday.**

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. **Senate Corporations vote 1-4. Measure is dead for 2022.**

REVENUE/FISCAL

SF2 Legislative budget

Management Council

\$23 million is appropriated for the Legislature for the next biennium. Read the fiscal note for details. **Senate passed 3-0. House Appropriations approved 7-0. On General File.**

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. **2nd reading in House.**

SF66 American rescue plan act recovery funds appropriations

Joint Appropriations Committee

Comprehensive plan for allocating \$334.5 million in federal funding to judicial and executive branches. See bill for details. **On House General file.**

SF67 State Funded capital construction

Joint Appropriations Committee

Check bill and fiscal note for details. Converts Capitol Building Rehabilitation and Restoration account into a Preservation Account and provides for continuous appropriations for maintenance, preservation and enhancement. Includes Herschler Building. Includes federal funds, General Fund and other state accounts. **In House Appropriations.**

SF69 Property tax limits

Sen. Tim Salazar, R-Dubois

Caps increases in assessed valuation of real property to a maximum 5 percent a year. Fiscal notes says impossible to calculate the loss of revenue to the School Foundation Program and to local governments. Also would increase workload for assessors' offices. **Vote in Senate Ag was 2-3. Dead for 2022.**

HEALTH/ENVIRONMENT

HB85 Child endangering-controlled substance use while pregnant

Rep. Ember Oakley, R-Riverton

Adds to our child endangerment statutes the offense of knowingly consuming meth or a controlled substance (without a prescription) while pregnant. Penalty is a max 5 years in prison and/or \$5,000 fine. Opposed by groups that favor treatment (not incarceration) for women with substance abuse disorder. **2nd reading in House.**

HB92 Abortion prohibition-Supreme Court decision

Rep. Rachel Rodriguez-Williams, R-Cody

Under this bill, if the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe vs. Wade, all abortions would be prohibited in Wyoming except to protect a woman's health. **2nd reading in House.**

SF36 Pharmacy benefit managers act enhancements

Joint Labor Committee

Greatly increases restrictions and regulation of Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM)s 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. Extensively amended. Be sure to use engrossed version.

Senate passed 24-6.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

HJ1 Supreme court justices and district judges retirement

Joint Judiciary Committee

Retirement age raised from 70 to 75. ***House approved 54-5-1. In Senate Judiciary.***

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. ***2nd reading in Senate.***