

2022 Wyoming Legislature
League of Women Voters of Wyoming
Bill Summary #4 as of 3-6-22 (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. *3rd reading in Senate Monday.*

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. *Passed Senate 20-10. Back to House for concurrence.*

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. *3rd reading in Senate.*

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 Senate 22-8. Back to House for concurrence.*

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. *House Judiciary approved both. SF25 on House General File. SF26 ready for 2nd reading in House.*

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.*

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. 3rd reading in House.*

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 heavily amended during 3rd reading to address the “witchhunt” characterization and passed 29-1. In House Appropriations Committee.*

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. *House approved 55-0-5. Signed as Senate Enrolled Act 8.*

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. ***Missed General File cutoff in Senate and is dead for the session.***

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. ***Assigned to House Appropriations, where expected to be discussed Monday. Fate is in doubt.***

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. ***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. ***2nd reading in House.***

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. Another 2022 bill that seems to address a non-problem. ***Senate passed 18-12. In House Education.***

REVENUE/FISCAL

SF2 Legislative budget Management Council

\$23 million is appropriated for the Legislature for the next biennium. Senate rejected amendment for electronic voting. ***House passed 53-1-6. Signed as Senate Enrolled Act 3.***

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. ***Passed House 40-19-2. In Senate Appropriations.***

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. Dozens of amendments offered in Senate and House. Note House 3rd reading amendment #3, which Helps expand access to health insurance by helping people qualify for federal subsidies on the healthcare marketplace. ***House passed 41-18-1. Senate rejected House amendments. In Conference Committee.***

SF67 State Funded capital construction Joint Appropriations Committee

Check bill and fiscal note for details. House added several projects before passing 44-15-1. Senate did not concur, so in conference committee. (See bill digest for a list of the conferees.) Senate added \$28.7 million renovation of UW law school. House rejected an amendment to install a 3-by-5 foot sign at the law school saying the renovation was paid for by the energy industry. ***In Conference Committee.***

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. House amended to impose probation

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for first offense. But mental health and social work advocates oppose strongly as creating more danger to women and babies. ***House passed 46-13-1. Approved in Senate Judiciary 3-2, on General File.***

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. House rejected an exception for incest. ***House passed 43-16-1. In Senate Labor.***

SF36 Pharmacy benefit managers act enhancements Joint Labor Committee
House Corporations voted to table the bill, hoping to work the issue with stakeholders during the interim. ***Senate passed 24-6.***

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

HJ1 Supreme court justices and district judges retirement Joint Judiciary Committee
Retirement age raised from 70 to 75. ***Senate approved 20-10. Signed as House Enrolled Joint Resolution 1.***

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. Senate amended to better define means testing for the exemption. ***Passed Senate 29-1. In House Revenue.***