

LWV Wyoming Report #4 3-6-22  
 2022 Wyoming Legislature  
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 Legislative Service Office Website [wyoleg.gov](http://wyoleg.gov)

This fourth and final week of the 2022 Wyoming Legislature budget session begins with two major actions: The joint conference committee on the budget bill finishes its work and sends its compromise version to the Senate and then the House for adoption.

The House is expected to take up concurrence on HB100, the redistricting bill.

Listen to both these floor debates on YouTube.

Also, keep track of the session deadlines as the Legislature approaches its adjournment at midnight on Friday, March 11. (Okay, 12 a.m. is technically March 12.) Monday is the deadline for reporting bills out of committee in the second house. Tuesday is last day of General File, Wednesday for second reading, Thursday for third reading, Friday at 2 p.m. for all joint conference committee reports.

Bills that are given final approval by the House and Senate are signed as “enrolled” acts or joint resolutions. They then go to the governor’s desk, where he can sign, let them go into law without his signature or veto. The governor may veto entire bills or line items in the budget bill. A veto override requires a 2/3 vote of both the House and Senate.

### **Budget Bill (SF1)**

The conference committee on the budget bill (SF1 this session) hashed out the remaining differences in the House and Senate bill versions late Friday and will sign them Monday to lay before their respective chambers, starting with the Senate. If it’s not accepted, the conferees will go back for a second try.

Two of the last issues to be settled were the External Cost Adjustment for schools and a Senate amendment to cut funding for UW’s gender studies program. They agreed on the \$9 million supplies and utilities funding in the House bill (still missing the \$26 million calculated by the Joint Education Committee as necessary for personnel). The conferees also replaced the gender studies amendment with one to gather data on UW course requirements for students outside their majors.

(The Casper Star-Tribune has a good article on the gender studies funding dispute and the growing tendency of the Legislature to use funding and statutes to control both UW and k-12 curriculum, materials and course offerings.)

### **Redistricting (HB100)**

The Senate threw months of wrangling and adjustments and compromise out into a snowbank when it approved a plan to keep 60 House seats and 30 Senate seats, instead of the House plan for 62 House and 31 Senate seats. Some analysts contend the Senate action derives from reluctance to create new seats for the few populous, non-rural areas of the state that grew in the past 10 years. It also seems to protect more legislators’ seats with largely the same lines.

Follow the action by using the HB100 bill text or go straight to the maps on the Legislative Service Office’s redistricting site.

The fear is that, without a compromise between the two positions, the Legislature will need a special session to complete the 2022 redistricting, which will put our county clerks and commissioners into a bind to approve precinct lines for this year's political races.

### **Voting Restrictions**

SF97 Change in party affiliation passed the Senate and finally was sent to House Appropriations late last week. The 7 Appropriations members are expected to consider the bill on Monday, but its prospects look questionable right now, and Monday is the deadline for committee work. At issue is the State GOP desire to have better control over the results of Primary Elections by restricting who can use the Republican ballot. LWVWY has consistently opposed efforts to restrict access to the ballot box by qualified electors, including the ability to change party affiliation at any time in the election season.

### **Medicaid Expansion**

Although Medicaid Expansion itself is dead for the 2022 session, there is some help for low-wage uninsured people in Wyoming, in the form of a third reading amendment to SF66, the bill to spend American Rescue Plan federal funds. It is amendment #3, offered by House Speaker Eric Barlow, R-Gillette, to help people qualify for the federal healthcare Exchange. It is a start to help more of our neighbors get health insurance. It was one of dozens of amendments added in the House, which will be scrutinized by the Senate when the bill goes there for concurrence.

### **Also note:**

- Floor sessions and committee meetings are streamed on the Wyoming Legislature's YouTube channel. The committee meetings have a Zoom option to testify. (See next item.)
- The LSO Website has information about bills and legislators. Check the daily legislative meetings and agendas for the House and Senate and committees. You will see opportunities to testify and to lobby lawmakers on individual bills and amendments.
- The other LSO Website page you will use every day is the bill page, which provides the previous action for each proposal, bill versions and amendments.
- Electronic handouts are required for the chamber floors and are recommended for committees. LSO no longer handles large deliveries (of anything) during sessions.
- The LSO online hotline is activated to leave messages for ALL members of a chamber on a specific bill. The telephone hotline is 866-996-8683 or 307-777-8683.
- Find links to LSO guides "Attending Legislative Sessions" and "Attending Legislative Meetings" at the top of the home page.

If you need help navigating the LSO Website or the Capitol, I am happy to help. My cell is 307-630-8095. Also, Margaret Brown of the Laramie and Wyoming Leagues is a great resource and sends updates to an email list of interested League members, so let her know if you want to join that.

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