

To: Wyoming LWV members
From: Marguerite Herman, LWVWY Lobbyist
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Re: 2023 WyoLeg Report #4
Date: Jan. 30, 2023

The filing of new legislation for the 2023 Wyoming Legislature ends this week, the third week of the session. The Senate filing deadline came on Friday with 197 bills and 14 resolutions. With two days left, the House total stands at 288 bills and 12 resolutions.

It will be a big week for the supplemental budget bill, with the Committee of the Whole (initial debate) on Monday and Tuesday, second reading Wednesday and third reading on Friday. HB1 and SF1 are identical versions that inevitably will be amended as they go through the House and Senate, ending with a conference committee to come to a compromise version that both chambers can accept and the governor can sign. Expect scores of proposed amendments on second and third reading, some of them substantial and the equivalent of stand-alone legislation. Find the proposed amendments on the Amendments tab of HB1 and SF1, although not in any particular order. Roll call votes will be recorded on amendments that raise spending. The governor has line-item veto authority.

Keep track of session deadlines and the progress of bills you support (or oppose). The budget bill will consume a lot of floor debate time this week, as bills languish on General File, including the two Medicaid bills we support, HB4 (Medicaid 12 month postpartum coverage) and HB80 (Medical treatment opportunity act). The final day for General File is Feb. 6. Tell Majority Floor Leader Neiman and ask your reps to ask Neiman to bring them up for debate because the people of Wyoming need that consideration. Be prepared for debate that both cavalier and ill-informed but also describing the great benefits for Wyoming. Another measure with great consequences for our state Medicaid program is HJ12 to seek federal review of Wyoming per-capita wealth so we can do better than a 50-50 funding match.

The 2023 session has dozens of election-related bills. Most propose to increase security with the effect of restricting voting, based largely on an unsubstantiated fear of fraud. LWVWY opposes legislation that decreases access and participation without meaningful and necessary gains in security. We supported a bill that would have ensured the confidentiality of the ballot (HB6, now dead). We oppose a bill (HB156) that greatly stiffens ID requirements that must be shown at the polls to confirm the voter isn't impersonating someone else. We oppose a bill (SF131, in Senate Corporations) that would prevent anyone but clerks to tell people how to request an absentee ballot. And we continue to oppose an attempt to limit a voter's ability to change party affiliation (HB103, HB141, HB207). A proposed ranked choice voting option for municipalities (HB49) seemed to answer complaints that primaries were decided by pluralities. Lawmakers killed that but may like proposals (HB265, HJ9) for a costly and (according to clerks) unworkable full-blown runoff primary.

As for other state League priorities, the missing persons alert system bill (HB18) is passed the House to the Senate, and various education finance bills are still in play. LWV supports bills and budget

amendments that bring the state into compliance with constitutional funding levels (including both operations and facilities). Note SF143 – Wyoming Freedom Scholarship Act, to pay \$6,000 a year to pay private school tuition (voucher), is in Senate Education Monday morning. So far, 8 proposals use “freedom” in its catch title.

The Legislative Service Office website has individual bill information (including amendments, status and roll call votes) and House and Senate floor and committee schedules. The Legislature is trying something new this session to front load most committee meetings in the morning. It avoids the late-night adjournment meetings, but it also makes it difficult for people to follow multiple bills. Many important bills are in committee Monday morning at the same time. Check the meeting schedule, which is a link off the home page of wyoleg.gov. Meetings are listed for the next day.

Our Legislative Liaison Committee continues to work with LWVUS on the bill tracking program Quorum, which will be handy to follow bills of interest to our state League. Find the tracker at <https://www.quorum.us/spreadsheet/external/RfeAZatgWJauorqiDnyE/>.