

To: Wyoming LWV members
From: Marguerite Herman, LWVWY Lobbyist
307-630-8095
Marguerite.herman@gmail.com
Re: 2023 WyoLeg Report #7
Date: Feb 21, 2023

The Wyoming Legislature took a long weekend and begins the sixth week of the 2023 session on Tuesday, with a major committee hearing Wednesday on Medicaid for Moms and two major deadlines on Friday, to get bills out of committee in the second chamber and to submit interim topic requests to legislative leaders on the Management Council.

HB4 Medicaid 12-month postpartum coverage (aka “Medicaid for Moms”) will be in Senate Labor at 8 a.m. Wednesday, with general optimism it will be approved and sent to an uncertain fate in the full Senate. Advocates, including LWVWY, are urging people to contact committee members (Chairman Baldwin and Sens. Barlow, Dockstader, Bouchard and Hutchings) to urge approval. You can include a personal story or a data point. It’s likely Chairman Baldwin will limit live testimony, but messages can be powerful, and they can be sent now to all 31 senators. (Find legislator contact information at wyoleg.gov.)

Legislative tradition praises the committee system, but 2023 lawmakers show willingness to ignore deadlines, reject interim committee work and disregard session committee decisions. Three proposals to restrict party affiliation changes during the entire primary season died fair and square during the session, the most recent being HB103 in Senate Corporations. However, senators voted by slim margins to pull that bill out of Corporations and refer it to a friendly Revenue Committee. As expected, Revenue heard the bill on Friday and voted 4-1 to send it to the Senate floor with a recommendation that it “do pass.” LWVWY, ESPC and civics advocate Gail Symons of Sheridan testified against HB103. It is now on General File for initial Senate debate on Tuesday, with one proposed amendment (by Laramie Sen. Rothfuss) to give the GOP party chairman authority to permit primary party affiliation changes. (Check HB103’s digest for the roll-call votes on the question of withdrawing it from Corporations reassigning to Revenue.)

(In a similar move, the House Judiciary Committee voted 4-5 to reject SF56, reconsidered three days later and then voted to advance the measure to the full House. The bill, now on General File, would increase the authority of Wyoming Game and Fish staff to enforce laws against trespassing by hunters, anglers and antler-gatherers trying to get to public land.)

Other notable items from last week:

- The House and Senate approved the conference committee report on the supplemental budget bill, which spends \$26.5 million to fund the External Cost Adjustment for school finance and which saves \$1.4 billion of the state’s oil and gas revenue windfall (half in permanent funds). The bill is on the governor’s desk, for review, possible line-item vetoes and signature.
- A bill to close a campaign finance reporting loophole cleared the House, was agreed upon by the Senate, was signed and sent to the governor. **SF40** would require federal PACs to comply with state reporting requirements if they spent money on local campaigns or issues, something that was happening in Campbell County.
- An impasse remains between the House and Senate on HB47, whether the Secretary of State should have broad discretion to question the accuracy of voting machines and their federal certification and to order a recertification, which would throw our elections into “chaos,” according to Senate Corporations Chairman Case. The county clerks favor certification by the Election Assistance Commission but oppose the SOS discretion. **HB47** has been in a conference committee since Feb. 9.

Interim committee work provides the Legislature important time and information to dig into topics that are big and complicated and that will require lots of time and staff to research issues and write legislation to address. Often, interim studies emerge from subjects that come up during the regular session. Find the request form on the LSO website home page. The deadline for submission is 4 p.m. on Friday.

Quickly sort the legislation still in play by using the bill page filter of “**Active**,” “**Enrolled**” and “**Inactive**.” A bill number link takes you to the html version. PDF versions are listed to the right. Be sure to use the correct version for what you want: **Original** as it was introduced, **Engrossed** as the bill passed the first chamber, **Enrolled** as it passed both chambers. Use tabs at the top of the page to dig deeper on amendments, votes and fiscal impact.

- **HB18** - Missing person alert system is on the governor’s desk for his signature.
- **HB5** – Voter registry list also is ready for the governor’s signature.
- **HB152** Life is a Human Right passed the House Feb. 9 and is ready for further action in the Senate.
- **HB74** Voter ID requirements is on the governor’s desk.
- **SF61** Legislator per Diem is ready for 3rd reading in the House.
- **SF153** Election Security is in House Corporations.

Our Legislative Liaison Committee continues to work with LWVUS on the bill tracking program Quorum, which is useful to follow bills of interest to our state League. Find the tracker at <https://www.quorum.us/spreadsheet/external/RfeAZatgWJauorqjDnyE/>. Note: A field has been added to indicate that a bill is dead for the session. Also, you can “filter” the bills by House and Senate. In the next column, you can sort the bills by number.