
WEEK THREE LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY – JANUARY 29, 2023

The House and Senate are starting to work later hours, as deadlines approach. The deadlines give us a little sense of ease, as we finally know the totality of bills we are facing for the session. This week we have some excellent news for bills WACCT is supporting, and essential information for bills that may have a significant fiscal impact on the colleges.

Starting with the bad news – I spoke last week about the myriad of property tax relief bills and how WACCT is closely monitoring them, but we now have a few bills that are getting ahead of the others and will likely have strong support in the chambers. They are included in the WACCT Bill Tracking document, but two are very concerning:

- [SF 136 - property tax relief - assessment rate reduction](#) -as amended, this bill reduces the “all other” category of property taxation from 9.5% to 8.5%. While it offers tax relief to residential taxpayers, it harms those that utilize the local revenues, such as k-12 schools, counties, cities, special districts, and community colleges, and it **does not** provide backfill for those dollars.

This is what we know after the 2nd reading of the bill:

- The bill lowers the assessment rate for the entire 9.5% property tax category to 8.5%
- It is effective April 1st of 2023
- Applies to the calculation of taxable value assessed in calendar year 2023 to give more immediate relief. This should be of concern since your colleges are already in the budget process.
- There was an effort to backfill the local governments and colleges on 2nd reading, but the amendment failed. At the time, we didn’t know the exact impact on the colleges, but now we do – and it is significant.
- For this 1% reduction in the “all other “ category, the impact to the colleges is approximately **\$6M over the biennium (\$3M/year)**.

WACCT now has a position of opposition to SF 136 and sent a WACCT Action Alert asking trustees to communicate the devastating impacts of the bill to their senators.

- [SF 110 - personal property - tax exemption](#) – this bill repeals the provision for taxpayers to report tangible personal property and could have an even more significant impact on the colleges. ***WACCT is working with the WCCC to make sure we understand the numbers and will communicate them immediately.***

Now some good news – **HB 30 Wyoming’s Tomorrow Scholarship Amendments** passed the first hurdle in the House on Friday with a standing vote of 37 in favor of the bill. Based on the floor discussion, I asked each of the Presidents to get me examples of how your colleges partner with industry and what they provide in terms of scholarships and training, equipment, etc. We will ensure the right folks have this information so it can be said

on the floor. If you are interested in knowing where your legislator is on this bill, please contact me. I have a pretty good idea based on that standing vote and our work in the lobby.

The week of January 30th is **budget week** – the appropriators will spend part of Monday and Tuesday explaining the budget bill to the floors of both houses and then hear 2nd reading budget amendments on Wednesday and 3rd reading amendments on Friday. Of most importance to the colleges is the appropriation for employee compensation and full funding for the Wyoming’s Tomorrow Scholarship endowment. Please encourage your legislators to support the budget and keep these items intact for the colleges.

Don’t forget the WACCT Board meeting on February 16th and the WACCT legislative breakfast on February 17th. A formal invitation will go out next week.

BILLS OF INTEREST THIS WEEK

- **HB 30 – Wyoming’s Tomorrow Scholarship Amendments** – The bill was amended to appropriate \$60M into the endowment fund, \$5M into the expenditure fund, as well as the Wyoming Works funding from HB 109. **Passed COW on Friday. 2nd reading on Monday, Jan. 30th. SUPPORT**
- **HB 65 – 988 Suicide hotline** – the bill passed the House, but the trust fund was stripped from the bill and was amended to require the Department of Health include an exception request for this funding going forward.
- **HB 66 – Prohibiting mask, vaccine, and testing discrimination** - passed 2nd reading in the House. **The criminal penalties were placed back into the bill. 3rd reading will be Monday the 30th.**

Please visit the [WACCT webpage \(Advocacy page and 2023 Resources\)](#) for the WACCT Bill Tracking, Legislative priorities, and talking points.

KEY DEADLINES ([click here for the full schedule](#)):

- Monday, January 23 - **Legislature Will Not Convene for MLK recognition.**
- Thursday, January 26 – last day for Senate Files to be introduced
- Monday, January 30 – Budget Bill-Committee of the Whole
- Tuesday, January 31 - Last day for House Bills to be introduced
- Friday, February 3 - Last day for Bills to be reported out of the Committee in the house of origin
- Monday, February 20 -**Legislature Will Not Convene for President’s Day recognition**
- Friday, February 28 - Last day for Bills to be reported out of Committee in the second house
- Wednesday, March 1- Last day for Third Reading in the second house
- Friday, March 3 - Adjourn

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WEEKLY ZOOM

Remember, WACCT hosts weekly conference/Zoom calls to keep you updated on **Fridays at 10am.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84012002625?pwd=MG9UWIV4MkZKNjl6MVp0eGFOMkhEQT09>

- Meeting ID: 840 1200 2625
- Passcode: 032653
- 1-669-444-9171