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## WEEK ONE LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY – FEBRUARY 17, 2025

The sixty-eighth legislature convened on Tuesday, January 14, for the 2025 General Session swearing in many new legislators and introducing a shift in leadership. Prior to the session, the Freedom Caucus debuted their [“Five and Dime Plan,”](#) which outlines their priorities for the legislative session:

- Election integrity
- Immigration accountability
- “Unwoke” initiative – eliminating DEI initiative at UW and the community colleges.
- Protecting core industries
- Reducing property taxes
- Voting transparency
- Protecting women in sports
- Banning sanctuary cities
- Eliminating pornography in public schools
- Overhauling eminent domain laws

Governor Mark Gordon delivered his state-of-the-state address on Wednesday highlighting Wyoming’s leadership and innovation in energy, natural resource management, education and economic development. [Read press release.](#) [Read full state-of-the-state address here.](#)

Bills are being posted daily, as it is rumored, we will see a record number of bills filed this year. The Senate has until January 29<sup>th</sup> to introduce legislation, while the House of Representatives has until February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The Joint Appropriations Committee started work on the supplemental budget and capital construction. Remember, the House Committee is entirely new, save Rep. Sherwood, and the Senate has two new members. The House and Senate Committees have not worked together much, so this second week will be telling as to how they work together.

### **JANUARY CREG UPDATE**

The Consensus Revenue Estimative Group (CREG) [January update](#) was released this week with four major revisions from the October report:

1. Decreasing the projected oil price for calendar year (CY) 2025 from \$70/barrel down to \$65/barrel. This impacts severance taxes, federal mineral royalties and ad valorem taxes.
2. Increasing the forecast production of oil for CY 2026 by 1M barrels, to a total of 105M barrels.
3. Updating the beginning balances of the Permanent Wyoming Mineral Trust Fund and the Common School Account within the Permanent Land Fund. This was more of an accounting adjustment.
4. Reduction in state royalties due to a decrease in coal and oil production occurring on state lands.

There were some agency reversions, realized capital gains and slightly reduced sales and use taxes as well. But for the bottom line, this Legislature will have \$11.55M less revenue to appropriate for the supplemental budget. The School Foundation Program (basic funding for K12 schools) will have more demands on that account (think External Cost Adjustment, property tax relief, etc.).

## WHAT HAPPENED THIS WEEK

- **Property tax relief** – There are many property tax bills – this week we saw two move forward.
  - [SF 67- Long-term homeowners tax exemption](#). This bill revises the long-term homeowner’s tax exemption program, passed during the 2024 Budget Session. These revisions include removing the surviving spouse language, changing the eligibility for residing in Wyoming down to six months, from eight, and removing the sunset date on the program.
    - **Passed Senate Revenue**
  - [HB 169 - Homeowner tax exemption-2025 and 2026](#). This bill provides a 50% exemption on the first \$1M of fair market value for residential structures, which is only applicable for tax years 2025 and 2026. The bill provides a backfill for half of lost revenues to local governments, subject to available funds. A \$125M appropriation from the General Fund and up to \$100M from the Legislative Stabilization Reserve Account to fund the backfill. **WACCT testified and asked the Committee to pause to consider how the property tax relief that has already passed will impact local entities.**
    - **Passed House Revenue.**
- **Capital Construction** – The House Appropriations approved all the Gov’s recommendations for capital construction except the approval of the Campell County High School. We have yet to understand where and how cap con will move forward. Likely, in a separate bill.
- **K12 CTE** – The House heard HB 17 and HB 18 that both support building more CTE access to grants and funding for K12 districts. WACCT testified in support of both bills.
- **Budget Bill Gov Vetoes** – the Joint Committee on Friday voted to override the vetoes the Governor issued (the Legislature was not able to override them due to timing). The changes do not add or take away any money, but direct how the money should be spent. An example is UW’s DEI initiative.
  - [Here is an article explaining the actions.](#)
- **Gun bill** – HB 172 was heard in the House Judiciary Committee on Friday. The Committee heard testimony both for and against the bill. WACCT testified alongside UW with similar concerns for exemptions from the bill. On Monday, Jan. 20<sup>th</sup> the Committee will debate the bill and make amendments. Here is WACCT’s policy statement on the removal of gun free zones:
  - WACCT understands and supports 2nd Amendment rights. We support responsible gun ownership and recommend that all individuals that carry concealed firearms on our campuses hold a Wyoming Concealed Carry Permit and be required to present this permit to our designated security personnel upon request. To effectively implement safe gun ownership, we support reasonable safety measures and needed safety upgrades to our campuses.
- **Other bills:**
  - What is a woman – HB 32 – moving through the House
  - Fairness in sports – intercollegiate athletics – passed Senate education
  - Stop ESG – State funds fiduciary duty act – continued work on Monday 1/20.

Please visit the WACCT Advocacy tab of the website for the weekly WACCT Bill Tracking, Legislative priorities, and talking points. [www.wacct.org/advocacy](http://www.wacct.org/advocacy).

## WEEKLY ZOOM

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

**LEGISLATIVE SCHEDULE** ([click here for the full schedule](#))