
WEEK ONE LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FEBRUARY 20, 2022

The 2022 budget session kicked off on Monday with Governor Gordon delivering his state of the state address. His message, while post COVID (as much as we can be at this point) and post significant budget cuts was tailored to highlight Wyoming's strengths and perseverance. Here are a few key points:

- The budget must still remain as flat as possible, as we continue to feel the impacts of the pandemic, inflation, and challenges from the current Administration on Wyoming's extractive industries.
- All-of-the-above energy policy that includes \$100 million to use as matching funds on Wyoming energy projects.
- Areas to increase attention include the state's Emergency Medical System, the state's outdoor recreation economy, and investing in the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust.
- Outlined the goals of his two major initiatives-- the Wyoming Innovation Partnership (WIP) which is geared toward statewide economic diversification and higher education and the Reimagining and Innovating the Delivery of Education (RIDE) Advisory Group which is geared toward K12.

[Watch his address](#)

[Read his prepared comments](#)

[Read press release](#)

This week was long and tedious, as all bills aside from the budget bill must receive 2/3 affirmative vote to move forward. So that means a roll call vote for every bill. Representative Harshman has worked to change that tradition for several years, to no avail.

Next week is budget week. Due to the increased prices for both oil, natural gas, and revenue replacement ARPA funds, the state finds itself back in the black and with some incredible opportunities in its lap. One of the biggest needs across state government (including the community colleges and UW) is employee compensation and the Governor also made that recommendation to the Joint Appropriations Committee. Both the House and the Senate will read in the budget bill on Monday, Tuesday, and debate second reading amendments on Wednesday and third reading budget amendments on Friday.

Key Deadlines ([click here for the full schedule](#)):

- Friday Feb. 18th was the last day for bills to pass introduction (therefore many bills likely died that day)
- Monday, Feb. 21st is a working day for the Legislature – no days off. No days off around here!
- Thursday, Feb. 24 is the last day for bills to report out of Committee in the first house.
- March 1st is crossover – where bills must be passed in the first house.

Themes of the session include continued work towards vaccine mandates (many of those bills were not considered on introduction and died), legislative redistricting, appropriation of the ARPA funds, biennial budget, of course, and other favorites such as medical cannabis, second amendment protection acts, critical race theory and runoff elections. All of the efforts to expand Medicaid died as bills, but there may be efforts to move it through the budget bill. One thing is certain, there is not much tolerance for tax bills this year and there isn't enough time in a 20-day session, so some bills are going to have to wait until next year.

Interim topics must be submitted no later than March 4th.

BILLS OF INTEREST THIS WEEK

- **HB 29 – Hathaway Scholarship Amendments** – passed committee of the whole in the House
- **HB 31 – Wyoming’s Tomorrow Scholarship Program** – passed House Education Committee and will move to the floor this week. We need to reach out to our legislators to show them the value of this INVESTMNET bill for the State of Wyoming!
 - [WACCT Support for HB 31](#)
 - [Industry Support for HB 31](#)
- **SF 43 – Community College Trustee Election** – passed introduction in the Senate
- **SF 67 – State Funded Cap Con** – passed the Senate

Please visit the [WACCT webpage \(Advocacy page and 2022 Resources\)](#) for the WACCT Bill Tracking, Legislative priorities, and talking points.

WEEKLY ZOOM

The remainder of the weekly conference calls will be held on **Fridays at 10am**.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89670185778?pwd=bjRFa1Q4aDVqU2dMMGNWalNiYS9qdz09>

Meeting ID: 896 7018 5778

Passcode: 839384