
WEEK THREE LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY – FEBRUARY 2, 2025

Week three ended with the beginning of the presentation of the budget on both sides of the building. Appropriators usually spend the afternoon explaining the changes made to the Governor's recommendations and answer questions from the body. The deadline for submitting budget amendments is 5pm the day before they are to be heard on the floor.

The marked up supplemental budget still contains \$200,000 for the WIP efficiency study, and we will watch for any helpful or harmful budget amendments related to the colleges. Be on the lookout for Action Alerts from WACCT if we need grassroots support or opposition.

The plan for hearing the budget on the floor of the House and Senate is as follows:

- January 31 & February 3 – presentation of the supplemental budget to the floor
- February 5 – second reading of the budget
- February 7 – third reading of the budget

We also have several deadlines that happened this week and upcoming:

- January 29 – last day for Senate files to be introduced
- February 3 – last day for House bills to be introduced
- February 7 – last day for bills to be reported out of committee in the house of origin

PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

There are many property tax relief measures drafted for consideration; however, several are quickly working their way through the process:

- [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 and is on general file in the Senate**
- [SF 69 – Homeowner Property tax exemption](#) – This bill exempts the first \$1M of a residential property up to 25%. It has been amended several times in the Senate and has one more reading to go. So far, the sunset and backfill have been removed.
 - **On 3rd reading in the Senate. It has been laid back several times as legislators work on ideas to amend.**
- [HB 39 – Property tax refund program provisions](#). Clarifies the percentage of household income from 165% to 145% so more people will qualify.
 - **Passed House Revenue, which is on general file in the House.**
- [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 only applies to 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.**
 - **Here is the vote on the final reading in the House:**
 - Aye: Bratten, Brown, G, Brown, L, Campbell, K, Clouston, Filer, Geringer, Guggenmos, Haroldson, Heiner, Hoefl, Johnson, Kelly, Knapp, Lien, Locke, Lucas, McCann, Neiman, Ottman, Pendergraft, Rodriguez-

Williams, Schmid, Singh, Smith, Strock, Styvar, Tarver, Washut, Wasserburger, Webb, Webber, Wharff, Winter

- Nays: Representative(s) Byron, Campbell, E, Chestek, Connolly, Davis, Erickson, Harshman, Jarvis, Larsen, Larson, Lawley, Nicholas, Posey, Provenza, Sherwood, Storer, Thayer, Williams, Wylie, Yin
- Excused: Representative(s) Eklund, Riggins
- Ayes 40 Nays 20 Excused 2
- [HB 282 - Property tax – acquisition value](#)
 - This bill reduces the assessment rate of residential real property from the current 9.5 percent to a proposed 8.3 percent.
 - This bill also establishes the fair market value of residential properties in accordance with the following:
 - For property acquired on or before December 31, 2019, the base year value for the property is the fair market value on January 1, 2019.
 - For property last acquired on or after January 1, 2020 and before December 31, 2025, the base year value for the property is the fair market value of the property on January 1 of the year the property was last acquired.
 - For property acquired on or after January 1, 2026, the acquisition value shall be used as the base year value for the property, except as provided in the proposed W.S. 39-13-103(b)(xviii)(IV).
 - Base year values shall be adjusted annually by an inflation factor of the lesser of 2 percent or the annual rate of the Consumer Price Index.
 - **On general file in the House**

WHAT HAPPENED THIS WEEK

- [HB 258 – State Funded Capital Construction](#) – In a move that has been seen before, the Joint Appropriations Committee carved out the state funded capital construction projects into a separate bill. The LCCC exterior renovation dollars are included, as well as CWC’s authorization, but the state dollars for the Sheridan College Science Center were rejected. **Passed the House. WACCT will work with Senators to amend the Sheridan College building back into the bill.**
- [SF 103 – Terminating and defunding diversity, equity and inclusion](#) – this bill prohibits, and limits funding used to promote DEI as mandated by the institutions of higher education. The bill also impacts contracts entered with state dollars. WACCT testified on the bill and offered several suggestions to amend the bill to make it more workable. We are working with the Tribes, UW and the WCCC to offer language to the sponsor, who has been very willing to work with us.
 - **On Senate general file, passed Senate Ag Committee last week.**
- **Other bills that impact the colleges:**
 - Student eligibility in sports – amendments – HB 60 – passed House 2nd reading
 - Protecting women’s privacy in public spaces act – HB 72 – on House general file
 - Data privacy – government entities – SF 65 – passed the Senate
 - Harmful communications – minors – HB 189 on general file
 - Age verification for websites with harmful material – HB 43 – House general file
 - Obscenity amendments – HB 194 – will be heard in House Judiciary on Monday
 - Public property and building amendments – HB 86 – passed 2nd reading in the House – WACCT supports
 - Governmental property – taxation and sale SF 185 – failed in Senate Revenue
 - Hathaway scholarship – amendments – HB 36 – passed the House. Now only adds noncredit CTE courses, not for-profit trade schools. WACCT supports.
 - Voter identification – revisions – HB 160 – disallows college ID’s from voting, (but still are allowed for registration). Passed the House
 - Compelled speech is not free speech – SF 77 – placed on Senate general file
 - For-profit trade schools – property tax exemption – SF 150 – Passed Senate Revenue. WACCT testified in opposition. This is a tax bill, not a CTE bill.

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

WEEKLY ZOOM Remember, WACCT hosts weekly conference/Zoom calls to update you on **Fridays at 10am**. **NOT this week due to WACCT Breakfast and WCCC meetings.**