
WEEK TWO LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FEBRUARY 26, 2022

The end of week two marks halfway for the session and a very long week dealing with the budget and deadlines for bills to move off general file. This means very long days and working well into the night for both houses. The budget was amended heavily – we are hearing that all of the surplus revenues and even some of the rainy-day funds were spent.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

The Colleges had several amendments – some successful, and some not as successful, but we did get some *big wins*:

- House and Senate – \$7.5M added to the state aid base in both houses– ongoing
- House – Funding for Wyoming’s Tomorrow, HB 31 (up to \$50 from the flow from the budget reserve account into the LSRA) – this passed with nice support in the House.
- House - Increased state employee compensation
- House and Senate - \$200,000 for community college rodeo teams

The concept of an endowment was not well received in the Senate (for Wyoming’s Tomorrow), so we will see how the negotiations go for HB 31 and the associated funding. An attempt was made in the Senate to give the Colleges some matching opportunity and other one-time funding “band aids” but they all went down in smoke, which negatively impacted the discussion for Wyoming’s Tomorrow funding.

WYOMING’S TOMORROW

We continue to work with industry partners to keep HB 31 alive as it moves toward 3rd reading in the House and on to the Senate. The best strategy at this point would be to keep the appropriation out of the bill so that we can get the structure set in place. We are hearing there may be an intention to include some “skin in the game” from industry. We will need to collaborate carefully with the sponsors, as this could alienate our lengthy list of industry supporters if it is not managed sensitively. Industry pays the majority of the tax burden in Wyoming and most of the time also equipment for high-demand programs. We cannot damage that commitment.

WHAT’S NEXT

The budget conference committee will get to work later next week, likely. Lawmakers attempted to pass Medicaid expansion and external cost adjustments for K12 as budget amendments, but both ideas failed several times. State employee salary increases did pass in one house (giving slightly more than the Gov’s suggested \$54M), so there will be quite a bit of negotiating in conference committee. Other bills of interest include the banning of crossover voting in elections (passed the senate), prohibiting the enforcement of federal regulation of firearms by state officials, and legislative redistricting. There is also a movement in the body to bring more transparency to the State Treasurer’s reporting.

Interim topics must be due no later than March 4th and WACCT will work this week to submit some ideas.

Thank you to everyone who was able to attend the WACCT Board meeting and legislative breakfast this week. We have a new favorite event during the session, and I heard wonderful things from legislators too.

We continue to thank our sponsors for their support!





BILLS OF INTEREST THIS WEEK

- HB 29 – Hathaway Scholarship Amendments – passed the House. In Senate Education 2/28
- HB 31 – Wyoming’s Tomorrow Scholarship Program – passed 2nd reading in the House. The appropriation was removed from the bill.
 - [WACCT Support for HB 31](#)
 - [Industry Support for HB 31](#)
- HB 147 – Cash Based Budget Development – passed COW in the House
- SF 43 – Community College Trustee Election – passed unanimously in the Senate
- SF 50 - Government waste, fraud, abuse, and whistleblower protection – Passed 2nd reading in the Senate
- SF 67 – State Funded Capital Construction – passed the Senate and House Appropriations Committee
- SF 69 – Property Tax Limits – Died in Senate Ag

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**. This week's meeting was cancelled due to the WCCC meeting, but we will be back at it next Friday.

Join Zoom Meeting

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

Meeting ID: 896 7018 5778

Passcode: 839384