

1-17-2017

Hello Sublette County, this is Albert Sommers reporting to you from Cheyenne on Tuesday, January 17. Today in Committee of the Whole, an “Old Friend” returned to the House in the form of House Joint Resolution #2. This joint resolution petitions Congress to call an Article 5 convention to propose amendments to the Constitution of the United States requiring a balanced federal budget. This is always one of the great debates during the session, and in past sessions it has failed.

I support a balanced federal budget, if done the right way, and with some common sense. Though there is little common sense in Washington. The opponents of this bill worry that if a constitutional convention were ever to occur, it would result in a runaway convention, and we could lose our great constitution. I voted for this joint resolution in the Committee of the Whole, but have not decided my final vote.

There have been multiple out-of-state lobbyist organizations pushing for this amendment, and my question is why? I always like to follow the money, and when I asked one of these interest group representatives for a list of donors to his organization, he declined to provide it. Who is behind this effort, and what do they stand to gain from cracking open our constitution?

The Appropriations Committee continued to hear from agencies we still have questions for. We have looked at taking agencies that now receive money from the General Fund, and putting them back on their own dollars or from accounts they used before the good times. One of these is WYDOT. Can we increase fees, and then move WYDOT off the General Fund? Can we move the State Engineer’s Office to the water accounts of the Water Development Commission, without extensively impacting water projects?

All of these cuts and movements of money could impact Sublette County. We could be jeopardizing highway projects, local dam projects, and airports. Are the citizens of Wyoming

willing to endure higher fees for state services in order to see them continue? There are no easy answers, and we haven't even started the K12 funding conversation. Yikes.

I hope I didn't miss your e-mails in the hundreds of e-mails I got on the upcoming UBER bill.

I can be reached at albert@albertsommers.com.

Goodnight.