

1-25-2017

Hello Sublette County, this is Albert Sommers reporting from Cheyenne on Wednesday the 25th. Today in Committee of the Whole, we debated two bills, HB 84 and 171, which give businesses that have become delinquent in workers' compensation and unemployment insurance some flexibility in payment schedules, as well as a reduction in delinquency interest rates. I supported these bills, because in difficult economic times we need to give businesses flexibility to recover. We also debated bills addressing the following:

- refining Wyoming's K12 accountability laws to incorporate the federal Every Student Succeeds Act
- expanding our service dog statutes to incorporate other service animals
- providing governmental immunity to search and rescue volunteers (a bill that I co-sponsored)
- my bill, HB 120, providing a process for county commissioners to petition WYDOT to decrease speed limits within their jurisdictions .

House members fiercely debated HB 120, concerned that locals would have too much influence on speed limits. I countered that WYDOT was still in control of the decision, and that this simply gives local government a process to have a conversation with WYDOT to reduce speeds in those areas where locals understand the hazards. Why shouldn't locals have a voice? For now, my bill barely passed; it will struggle to survive.

HB 135, the Government Anti-Discrimination Act, has garnered national attention, and I continue to receive feedback from Sublette County residents on both sides of the issue. I remain concerned that this bill would relieve locally elected officials from carrying out their statutory mandates, based upon individual religious beliefs. This bill has, as yet, not been scheduled for debate.

We also heard HB 153 in Committee of the Whole today. This bill reaffirms parental rights. I support the concept behind this bill, but am concerned about its unintended consequences, should it pass. Could a parent decide to not educate a child, even though state statute requires every child in Wyoming receive an adequate education? We must always look for the unintended consequences of the bills we debate. I can be reached at albert@albertsommers.com

Thank you