

2-15-2017

Hello Sublette County this is Albert Sommers reporting to you from Cheyenne on Wednesday, February 15. Today in Committee of the Whole, we debated Senate Files, including a bill that funds water project planning, of which one is the New Fork Lake Dam expansion; a bill that refines tele-pharmacy statutes to improve access to rural areas; a bill dealing with Title 25 payment obligations; a bill relating to the child health insurance program, amending benefits to include authorization for managed care; a bill amending the small employer health reinsurance program; and a bill increasing the penalty for illegal hunting guides. We killed a bill that would have changed who could apply for planning money for a water project.

In the House Appropriations Committee this morning, we passed a bill out of committee that would continue the Film Industry Financial Incentive program, which would have sunsetted without this legislation. The program still has some money in its coffers, so this bill would allow the program to receive local matches from lodging tax dollars and other entities. Some great scenic movies that should have been filmed in Wyoming were not, including some based upon books by Wyoming authors. Having our great landscape in a movie enhances our state as a destination for tourists around the world. I don't believe in throwing a lot of money at this program, but I support enabling a friendly climate for film makers. We did not add any new money to the program.

The House Conference Committee for the budget was chosen today, and I was selected as a member of that group. We met with the Senate Conference Committee upon recess today, where staff explained the differences between our two positions on the budget. We will soon begin tough negotiations on how to resolve our differences, including the Senate's \$91.5 million cut to K12 education. I can be reached at [albert@albertsommers.com](mailto:albert@albertsommers.com).

Goodnight.