

3-1-2017

Hello Sublette County, this is Albert Sommers reporting to you from Cheyenne on Wednesday, March 1. Yesterday was the last day for hearing bills in Committee of the Whole, which means that we cut off debate on new bills. Today, the House heard bills on Second and Third Reading, and we heard conference committee and concurrence reports. Concurrence happens when one body asks the other body if it will agree to (concur with) the changes the one body made to the other body's bill. If the house of origin does not concur with the other body's changes, then a conference committee is established to hammer out the differences.

The potential for conference committee exists right now with a couple of high priority education bills, including the bill that authorizes money for school capital construction. The big debate is whether to fund Carey Junior High School in Cheyenne, and whether the disagreement could result in the loss of the whole bill, which also includes the construction of a new school in Jackson. Both communities are increasing in population during a depressed Wyoming economy, and their schools are over capacity.

The greatest debate on the floor today was in Third Reading of Senate File 88, Palliative Care, which created a council to help develop best practices for that service. Palliative care is patient and family centered medical care that optimizes quality of life by anticipating, preventing and treating suffering caused by serious illness. I supported the bill, because in our rural communities end-of-life care is often hard to find. I will support anything we can do to help support palliative care in rural Wyoming. Concerns arose that seemed to connect palliative care bills with assisted suicide, but this bill strictly prohibits discussion of those practices, and it ultimately did pass and will go to the Governor for signature. I never fully understood the strident concerns about this bill, as they were never fully articulated in the debate. I can be reached at [albert@albertsommers.com](mailto:albert@albertsommers.com)

Goodnight for now