

2-22-2018

Hello Sublette County, this is Albert Sommers reporting to you from Cheyenne. Today, we took a break from the budget bill, and continued to hear bills in Committee of the Whole. Bills that were heard and passed COW cover issues such as adding computer science to the common core of skill, altering the move-over requirement on our highways, extraterritorial jurisdiction of cities and towns, expanding the Hathaway scholarship to a few select out-of-state students, preventing non-compete clauses for new physicians, K12 capital construction and major maintenance, setting aside \$10 million per year for future construction of a new penitentiary, requiring the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission to pay for the evaluation of instream flow considerations, privacy of genetic information, expungement of juvenile records, and much more. In fact we heard 65 bills today in Committee of the Whole.

HB186, brought by the Speaker of the House, is designed to further define the spending policy for income from our Permanent Mineral Trust Fund. We now have enough in the reserve account of this permanent fund to guarantee more of its revenue for use. This will allow us to secure funding for half of our K12 school major maintenance and capital construction – without raising anyone’s taxes. This was patterned off the Harvard Endowment Fund. I support this philosophy; we need to trust our trust funds, and modernize our revenue flows.

Two controversial bills are HB141, allowing guns in a place of worship, and HB168, Stand Your Ground. Both bills have raised concerns back home. Are these bills needed, or are they a solution looking for a problem? Let me know your thoughts.

HB133 would require public entities to place the motto “In God We Trust” inside their buildings, and in fact inside every school room in Wyoming. The bill was improved today by an amendment, which passed, not requiring entities to post the motto, but simply allowing them to. The original bill seemed to be far too prescriptive. The bill moved to second reading.

I voted against HB20, which would have given the Legislature some authority over the development of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) related to endangered species. This was

a committee bill that I tried to improve with an amendment, but in the end I voted against it.
The bill died in Committee of the Whole.

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Thank you.