

3-2-2018

Hello Sublette County, this is Albert Sommers reporting to you from Cheyenne on Friday, March 2. The House heard Senate Bills on Second Reading this morning and worked in Committee of the Whole for the afternoon.

A few bills relating to wildlife and the Game and Fish Department were discussed today. The House debated SF03, Antelope Hunt Licenses, for much of the morning. This bill lets the Game and Fish Commission issue more antelope hunting licenses for two specific antelope hunt events. The debate revolved around concerns that this would create special treatment for some groups or individuals and that the Game and Fish Commission would have no authority to regulate a way to distribute these licenses fairly. An amendment was proposed which specified that the Game and Fish Commission would have to create new rules and policies for these licenses. However, the Game and Fish Commission already has this authority and does not need it specified in this bill, so the amendment failed. The bill moved on to third reading.

The House debated SF81, Game and Fish Department Budget Requests, in COW. Last year, the Game and Fish Department was removed entirely from General Funding. This bill cleans up some lingering statutes that are not in line with that change. It passed Committee of the Whole.

Also in Committee of the Whole today was SF41 which creates an organ-donation task force to improve the efficiency of organ donation and harvesting within Wyoming. There were concerns about why this task force would be necessary, but clearly, improving the efficiency of organ donation within Wyoming has the potential to save other lives, and maximizing the efficiency of this process is beneficial to many. This bill passed COW.

SF82 is an attempt to decrease payments from the Wyoming's Miner's Hospital Board Account, and increase the account's longevity, by increasing the number of years before a miner is eligible for a distribution. This bill also passed.

SF42 changes requirements for background and criminal record checks for the State's licensing and certification boards. This bill ensures that criminal offenses or felonies older than 20 years

will not prevent someone from being licensed or certified for their occupation. The bill was debated for some time. Many claimed that felonies or criminal offenses do not always apply to the occupation that the person might be interested in, and mistakes when you are young should not hang over your head your entire life. Others claim that licensed professionals should be held to a higher standard. The bill passed COW with amendments. I do not support this bill right now, but did support the others mentioned.

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Thank you