

3-9-2018

Hello Sublette County, this is Albert Sommers reporting to you from Cheyenne on Friday, March 9. Today, on Third Reading we passed with my support SF61, which would allow fluorescent pink to be utilized for a hunting safety color. Other bills that passed Third Reading with my support included creating a retirement income security task force, allowing real property to be utilized as a collateral bond, studying efficiencies in K12 transportation systems, funding further efforts at finding state government efficiencies, creating an opioid addiction task force, expanding a drug donation program, and two more ENDOW bills which help expand workforce and entrepreneurial ecosystem development.

SF71 passed with my support today. This bill was the Senate's version of the Stand Your Ground bill. The bill was heavily amended in the Senate, and as a result law enforcement and county attorneys ended their opposition to the bill. Originally, the bill was too expansive, and would have greatly impeded law enforcement's ability to investigate potential crimes. Today, an amendment was brought that would limit the civil immunity a person would have under this Act, if he shot an innocent bystander. I believe that was a good amendment, it passed, and I supported the bill.

SF74 passed today without my support. This bill was created to provide increased penalties for causing damage to critical infrastructure, or for impeding the ability to access critical infrastructure. This was designed to protect structures like natural gas compressor stations from either internal or external terrorist attacks. It was also in response to the issues that occurred in North Dakota during the Keystone Pipeline protests. This bill came to the floor of the House from the standing committee with at least two amendments, and took on 23 more amendments on the floor of the House. There were concerns that this bill would impede free speech, but I believe that amendments were passed to address that issue. In the end, I voted against the bill because I was concerned about the unintended consequences that this bill would have for landowners who had critical infrastructure on their property. The definition of critical infrastructure was too broad, and the penalties for violation too steep. A second reading amendment would have exempted landowners from the Act, but it was stripped in a third

reading amendment. After protection for landowners was stripped, I could not support the bill. When a bill has that many amendments brought to it, there is a good chance something is wrong with it.

The Joint Conference Committee on the budget bill reached a compromise today, but state capital construction and education finance still need a resolution. We will work on Saturday to find a solution.

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Thank you