

3-3-2020

Hello Sublette County, this is Albert Sommers reporting to you from Cheyenne on the seventeenth day of the 2020 Budget Session. We are continuing to work our way through a number of bills passed out of the Senate. A few of the key bills which we considered today include:

- SF 8, Missing and murdered indigenous persons – agency cooperation. This bill would improve communication and cooperation among the Division of Criminal Investigation, Wyoming Office of Homeland Security, Division of Victim Services, highway patrol and others, including federal, tribal and local law enforcement, in the reporting, investigation, emergency alert and recovery of missing persons on reservations. We have seen a number of tragic cases of missing persons on reservations here in Wyoming and this bill aims to crack down on this. I supported this bill which passed on second reading in the House today.
- SF 4, Wildlife conservation account. This bill would authorize acceptance and solicitation of donations for wildlife conservation efforts related to the transportation system. I supported this bill, which passed out of the House, with concurrence in the Senate and is now on its way to Governor Gordon for consideration.
- SF 17, Hathaway need-based scholarships – graduate school. This bill would open up limited Hathaway need-based scholarships for graduate school. I supported this bill which passed Committee of the Whole today.
- SF0042, Nicotine products – age verification and shipping. This bill would raise the age for nicotine use to 21, which is consistent with the new federal law that forbids the sale of nicotine products to persons under the age of 21. An amendment was passed that reduced most of the penalties in the bill. Another amendment will be brought to eliminate penalties for possession, but still maintain penalties for sale to persons under the age of 21. I support this bill, which attempts to help prevent the sale and use of vapes to teenagers. I will support amendments to reduce the penalties, because people

between 18-21 years of age who are currently utilizing tobacco products legally would find themselves criminals. The bill passed Committee of the Whole.

- SF 57, Local government distributions. This critical bill, sponsored by the Joint Appropriations Committee, provides funding to cities, towns and counties and establishes local government funding formulas and distributions. I support the current form of this bill, which would provide more money to smaller towns than our previous formula. I supported this bill, which was passed by the Committee of the Whole today in the House.

As always, I can be reached with questions or concerns at albert@albertsommers.com.

Thank you,

Albert Sommers