

## **How Does This Fit?**

As the Wyoming Legislature prepares for its special session next week, we encourage our leaders to continue on the path toward economic diversification, certainty and stability. The legislature should continue its efforts to grow the economy, not increase regulation and mandates on businesses. Mandates, whether federal or state (including mandates by one to counteract mandates by the other), take away the ability to make important decisions from those most capable, most understanding and most impacted: business leaders and their employees.

Since 1890, Wyoming's leaders have spearheaded efforts to diversify our state's economy through several boom-and-bust cycles. Complimenting those efforts are the actions of our steady-handed business leaders, a constant in every economic roller-coaster ride. Over 98% of the businesses that call Wyoming home are "small business" (under 100 employees) and employ about 63% of Wyoming's total workforce. As business leaders, we have worked hard to make good choices and to keep our state strong and competitive.

Our leaders have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in providing opportunities to grow and diversify Wyoming's private sector. Some examples of these investments include expanding broadband, creating opportunities for meat processing, offering business relief during the Covid-19 pandemic, and funding infrastructure grants for communities. Businesses and State leaders are also working hard at creating job opportunities for Wyoming's youth today and tomorrow.

Now is not the time to unwind those positive steps, which are helping create a business climate envied by many surrounding states. We can't let our collective detest for federal over-regulation cloud our judgment on how we allow our businesses to operate in a free-market economy grounded in making choices and living with the consequences of those choices.

Wyomingites understand better than most that "one size does not fit all." One of the ways we have achieved collective success is by having a business climate that is welcoming and simple. From the smallest feed store operated out of a garage to our global corporations who employ hundreds, our businesses know what is best for their daily operations.

State legislation that promotes the jailing of Wyoming's business leaders, encourages employees to sue their employers or makes it any harder to run a business in Wyoming hurts everyone.

Our slogan at the Wyoming Business Alliance is that business makes Wyoming better. Let's continue to strive to be our best, keep our eye on the ball and govern in a calm, measured, and common-sense manner, instead of reacting to federal policies we have neither seen nor had an opportunity to fully understand. Our federalist system is far from perfect, but two wrongs don't make a right, and Wyoming's businesses need our leaders to get this right.

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