

3/25/2021

Hello Sublette County, this is Albert Sommers reporting to you from Cheyenne on March 25, 2021. We have now finished “crossover,” so the House will be debating only Senate Files moving forward. The first Senate Files that we will debate are committee bills, which were developed during the interim by joint committees. Most of these bills have gone through an extensive public review process, which helps them move forward during the session.

On March 24, the House debated and passed several bills on 3rd Reading that I supported, including [HB0036](#), Management council membership. This bill changes the membership of Management Council to better reflect the current proportion of Republican and Democrats in the Legislature. I have resisted voting for this bill in the past, because Management Council is more ministerial than political. Management Council is the board of directors for legislative staff and determines interim topics to study.

The reason I changed my mind was two-fold. First, the number of Democrats in the Legislature has shrunk significantly since the membership was last altered. The second reason was that the Legislature now has a member from a third party, an Independent, who also has a right to vote for representation on the Council.

During debate, the House amended the bill and reduced Management Council membership from 6 Senate members and 7 House members to 5 members from each body. This will include the leadership positions (Senate President, Senate Vice-President, Speaker of the House, Speaker Pro Tem, and Minority and Majority Floor Leaders of both bodies), plus one member voted on at large by each body. Because Senate President, Vice-President, and Speaker of the House are elected by their respective full chambers, these are not party-affiliated positions. The majority and minority floor leaders of both chambers, on the other hand, are chosen by their partisan caucuses. This seems like an equitable solution to me.

The most heavily debated bill on 3rd Reading was [HB0162](#), Medical treatment opportunity act, which is a bill that would bring Wyoming closer to expanding Medicaid to the working poor. This idea has been debated every year since I was first elected, and I have never supported it in the past. This year is different, because the federal government is providing more dollars to

incentivize states to participate, and no alternative idea has been brought forward in my entire tenure that solves the health care dilemma for this population. The federal government provides Medicaid to the traditional population, and Wyoming has always participated. The Feds also provide stipends for health insurance for certain population that earn more money than the Medicaid Expansion group. This group of 20,000+ working poor and single mothers fall into a donut hole where no coverage exists.

I received a lot of calls, texts, and emails from local government, health care providers, hospital board members, chamber of commerce folks and ordinary citizens from Sublette County to support this bill. I do not believe this program will break the bank. So I voted for the bill, and it passed the House on a narrow vote.

More information about these bills and many more can be found at <https://wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2021>

I can be reached at [albert@albertsommers.com](mailto:albert@albertsommers.com) with questions or concerns.

Thank you.