

2/22/22

Hello Sublette County, this is Albert Sommers reporting to you from Cheyenne on February 22. Today, we heard bills on 2nd Reading, bills in 3rd Reading and debated bills in Committee of the Whole.

[HB0001](#), the Budget Bill, passed Committee of the Whole today. No amendments are allowed on the budget bill in Committee of the Whole. We will begin to debate amendments on the budget in 2nd Reading on Wednesday, and we will debate 3rd Reading budget amendments on Friday.

The House adopted House Rule 0001, which will allow remote participation for House members. Effective tomorrow, there will be a screen on the house floor for members who are unable to attend in person. Remote participation will also be available in committee meetings. With a few members out sick already and with the concern of having more members out due to illness, it was decided that Zoom participation would be allowed. We only have a total of 20 days to get through all our bills. If too many members are unable to participate in person, we will not be able to effectively do our jobs.

Several bills passed Committee of the Whole today that I supported, including [HB0049](#) - election reporting requirements. Any organization that receives contributions or expends funds in excess of \$1,000 for the purpose of causing an independent expenditure or electioneering communication to be made shall file a "statement of formation" for the purpose of reporting political expenditures. The purpose of this bill is to provide greater transparency in elections.

[HB0047](#) - impact assistance payments, was debated extensively and passed Committee of the Whole. In 2019, the state paid out almost 34 million dollars, much more than awarded in the past. We went from not awarding enough to awarding too much. This bill intends to avoid that by introducing a three-tiered approach. The various tiers and the maximum allowable percentage of funds to be awarded will depend on the size and cost of the project. I will need more information before I support this bill in 3rd Reading.

[HB0086](#) - genetic data privacy – amendments, passed Committee of the Whole. This bill updates the laws around genetic data privacy, in order to keep up with evolving science and law.

A bill important to Sublette County passed 3rd Reading yesterday: [HB0043](#) - trophy game, big game, and wild bison license allocations. I voted in favor of this bill. It makes the Big Five (ram big horn sheep, bull moose, mountain goat, wild bison, and grizzly bears) once-in-a-lifetime licenses. The bill also changed the license allocation for the Big Five to 90 percent resident and 10 percent non-resident. This license allocation change is financially hard on some outfitters in Sublette County, because it reduces the number of out-of-state clients who can hunt these species. I passed an amendment that phased this change in over five years. I felt this solution was fair to both local resident sportsmen and local outfitters. This was a bill that came out of the Wildlife Task Force I serve on.

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