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Hello Sublette County, this is Albert Sommers reporting to you from Cheyenne on February 24. We spent the majority of the day debating 30 bills in Committee of the Whole. On Friday, we will debate 3rd Reading amendments to the Budget Bill.

Among the interesting bills on 3rd Reading today, [HB0047](#) - local impact assistance payments, passed the House. If you recall from my last press release, this bill consists of a three-tiered approach to avoid overcompensating local governments for the impacts created by large industrial facilities. Various tiers and the maximum allowable percentage of funds are awarded dependent on the size and cost of the project. I did not support this bill on 3rd reading, because counties are worried they will not be adequately compensated for impacts created by large industrial projects like wind farms.

Bills that passed Committee of the Whole today include [HB0063](#) - county and district attorneys - salary amendments; [HB0091](#) - County officers-salaries; and [HB0096](#) - state officials salary, which are all similar to each other. HB63 and HB91 will promote local control and give county commissioners the power to increase salaries for county officials, such as county attorneys, sheriffs, assessor, treasurer and clerk. Locally elected county commissioners are best suited to make these decisions. Many of these county attorneys have not seen a salary bump since 2011. HB96 would provide a \$30,000+ increase to the Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Auditor, and Superintendent of Public Instruction. These elected officials have not seen a raise since 2002. I voted in favor of these bills.

[HB0031](#) - Wyoming's tomorrow scholarship program, passed Committee of the Whole. This is an adult scholarship program. Most states have similar initiatives. This concept is widely supported by industries in Wyoming, as the bill promotes workforce development. It establishes an endowment, but does not fund the endowment. I support this bill.

[HB0027](#) - Visitation rights, passed Committee of the Whole. This bill was heavily amended in committee and debated heavily on the floor. It is attempting to address the problem that occurred during COVID, when family members could not visit loved ones in nursing homes and

hospitals. The amendment tried to thread the needle between public safety and the rights of families. The amendment passed, and I supported this bill.

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