

3/8/22

Hello Sublette County, this is Albert Sommers reporting to you from Cheyenne on March 8. Today, the House heard bills on 2nd Reading, had final vote on bills in 3rd Reading, and voted on bills in Committee of the Whole. Today was the last day for Committee of Whole on bills in second house.

SF0080 - Omnibus water bill - construction, passed on second reading today. This is a yearly bill of water projects funded by severance tax dollars, and this year includes cloud seeding to encourage snow fall in the Wind River and Sierra Madre Mountain Ranges. Water is vital to our community, so my hope is that these funds help to improve our snowpack.

SF0048 - 2022 large project funding, passed the House on second reading. This bill is funded by the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust Fund, which funds wildlife habitat improvement projects. One project in this year's bill would remove conifers and various invasive grasses through mechanical and chemical treatments on 350,000 acres of native forests in Crook and Weston counties. I support this bill.

SF0076 - Financial exploitation of vulnerable adults. Many of you have likely had the honor of caring for an older relative or neighbor. Most of the time no issues occur. Sometimes, family members, neighbors or other care providers exploit those for whom they provide care. This bill focuses on financial exploitation. The intent of this bill is to create safeguards for these vulnerable populations. It was a noble effort, but the bill did not have a mechanism to ensure adequate protection for the information in the bank accounts of vulnerable adults. The bill also did not have a way to prevent banks from unnecessarily freezing the accounts of vulnerable adults. I amended the bill, but it did not pass Committee of the Whole.

SF0106 - Wyoming stable token act, passed Committee of the Whole today. Some of you may remember from the days of your youth when cash was issued in the form of a silver certificate. This was done to ensure that the paper money you held in your hand was backed by a commensurate amount of silver, and thus gave the holder confidence in the note. SF0106 is an interesting bill in that it creates a form of currency called a stable token that is backed by Wyoming reserves tied to the US dollar. The goal of this legislation is to provide a stable

cryptocurrency controlled by the State of Wyoming. Wyoming would then earn money by issuing these stable tokens. The bill is an extension of Wyoming's effort to lead the way in blockchain technology. I remain skeptical and have not decided how I will vote on the bill in 3rd Reading.

[SF0086](#) - Wildfires one-call exemption, also passed Committee of the Whole. Typically, when engaging in any earthmoving or excavating activities, you are required to call ahead to locate any utilities in the area being excavated. This bill provides an exemption to emergency responders who may sever a utility while responding to a wildfire. Because time is of the essence in an emergency response, it is impractical to call for locates during an urgent response. If the bill becomes law, emergency responders will be exempt from any liability associated with striking the utility. I believe this bill might go too far by not requiring any type of notification to the One-Call center. I hope these entities can work out their differences.

I can be reached at albert@albertsommers.com with questions and comments.