

Speaker of the House:**I'm Focused on Wyoming Solutions, Not Out-of-State Influences**

Throughout the last decade serving as a Representative in the Wyoming State Legislature, I have consistently used the following metric to assess legislation: does it solve a Wyoming problem with a Wyoming solution? Some bills that come to the Legislature do not come from Wyoming but instead from another state, or they are templates from a national organization. Bills not crafted in Wyoming often take a one-size-fits-all approach that demands the Wyoming Legislature's due diligence to ensure a bill solves a problem and does not create a new one.

As Speaker of the House, I have the added responsibility of keeping the House of Representatives focused on getting work done for the people of Wyoming. Part of this leadership responsibility is choosing which standing committee a bill goes to and whether it gets sent to a committee at all. I take this responsibility seriously; bad policy can create major consequences for Wyoming. Bills that are unconstitutional, not well vetted, poorly written, duplicate bills or debates, and bills that negate local control, restrict the rights of people, or risk costly litigation financed by the people of Wyoming should not become law.

I depend heavily on two particular committees. The Appropriations and Revenue Committees work on many of the most important bills during the session, and comprise seasoned legislators with critical expertise. Their members currently hold a combined 106 years of experience in the Legislature. I rely on those bodies to scrutinize weighty legislation because they understand the repercussions of legislation on Wyoming's citizens. These two committees are led by four chairmen and other pillars of the Legislature. The members of Appropriations and Revenue are workhorses who use their experience to critically examine tough issues without letting rhetoric and intimidation get in the way.

As an example, bills like [SF0172 - Stop ESG-State funds fiduciary duty act](#), in theory, have merit. However, it's our job to determine how bills will play out in Wyoming's reality. I sent SF0172 to the Appropriations Committee to ensure it was evaluated on its substance. The bill bans Wyoming government officials from contracting with businesses that have boycotted fossil fuels or are considering climate change in their investments. Members of the Appropriations

Committee identified significant gaps in the language. The Treasurer's Office raised questions about how this bill may impact Wyoming's investment portfolio. This bill is not worth risking our state's fiscal future just to send a message. I am hopeful that the language in this policy can be tightened up in the interim to allow us to support our base industries while preserving our investment strategies.

Keeping bills in my drawer is another way to ensure we stay focused on solving pressing issues for Wyoming. Here is a list of the bills I currently have in my drawer and why.

- [SF0086 - Voter identification-concealed carry permit](#). The bill allows Wyomingites to use their concealed carry permits as voter identification. I like this idea, but [House Bill 79](#) is a mirror bill that has already passed through the Legislature and became law this Session. Consideration of this bill would have wasted time with duplicate debate.
- [SF0117 - Parental rights in education](#). This bill disallows public school teachers from teaching sexual orientation and gender identity themes to children from kindergarten through the third grade, and directs school boards how to interact with parents. This type of teaching is not happening in Wyoming schools; moreover, the bill strips local control. Regardless of the issue, I've always fought against taking authority away from local school boards, town councils, and county commissions. Additionally, I believe this bill is unconstitutional as it violates the single-subject rule.
- [SF111 – Child Abuse- change of sex](#) is one of two bills that take on the subject of gender change in children. I sent a similar bill, [SF144 - Chloe's law-children gender change prohibition](#) out to a committee. I did not see the need to spend time debating two similar bills. I thought SF144 had a more appropriate policy position, and sent it to the Appropriations Committee to be vetted. The bill was passed out of committee with a Do Not Pass recommendation, but is available for debate if the Majority Floor Leader chooses.
- [SF143 – Wyoming Freedom Scholarship Act](#) is virtually the same bill as [HB194](#), which would have created an education savings account. An ESA account is similar to a school voucher system, giving parents state money to put their children in private schools or

homeschool. However, HB194 died in the House Education Committee. The Committee heard that bill once, and it failed. There was no need to waste time hearing the bill twice. I do not support this bill because I believe it is unconstitutional, and it is a major policy shift for the state of Wyoming. I do believe this issue will be taken up as an interim topic in the Joint Education Committee, where the idea can be fully vetted.

- [SJ0001 Amending Wyoming's act of admission for leases and earnings](#). This resolution would request that Congress introduce a bill and enact a law to amend Wyoming's Act of Admission. It changes the very language that made Wyoming a state, and I have serious concerns about its consequences. I believe it is a bad precedent to alter the document that created our statehood.

Bills that I also did not send to committee included: [HB0162 - County optional tax-affordable housing](#), which would have allowed a county to impose a real-estate transfer tax; [HB0193 - Carbon capture energy standards-repeal](#), which would have gutted Wyoming's carbon capture policy; and [HB0115 - Elections administration](#), which would have taken away election administration authority from the Secretary of State.

The Wyoming Constitution allows the Legislature to meet in Session for only 60 working days over two years. This time constraint is by design and helps curtail frivolous bills being debated over a lengthy period. I will continue to do my best to keep us focused in the brief time remaining in the Session.