

Hello Sublette County, this is Albert Sommers reporting to you from Cheyenne on March 7, the nineteenth day of the 2024 Budget Session.

As we approach the end of the legislative session, we are working the final Senate File bills and the budget.

Today, [SF54](#) passed the House, and if the Senate concurs, the bill heads to Governor. This property tax bill brings the largest form of relief to more than 90 percent of Wyoming home owners. In its amended form, the bill exempts 25 percent of assessed value for single-family homes valued at \$2 million or less in Wyoming. The shift to a percentage allows a more equitable exemption for most Wyomingites who need it. This exemption would be available for 2025. I support this bill.

[SF75](#) omnibus water bill-construction passed the House, with my support. The bill authorizes spending for specified level III water construction projects. Projects that get approved by the Select Water Committee go through a robust process that meet specified criteria. The process exists to ensure fair and equitable access to state dollars for water projects. There was an attempt through an amendment to add a project to this list, but that amendment failed. It's important to note that allowing any project that has not gone through proper vetting erodes the process. Water is one of our most precious resources and these water projects are of utmost importance.

As I explained in my update a few days ago, [SF118](#) allows for the reintroduction of bighorn sheep back into the Sweetwater Rocks area, near Jeffrey City. Wyoming has followed its own plan to allow bighorn sheep and ranchers to co-exist. This bill had several amendments, and became more friendly to ranchers. I supported the bill after amendments were adopted to address the concerns of the Wyoming Woolgrowers Association.

[SF13](#) appropriates \$75 million to the Management Council to cover potential legal expenses arising from state and county legal challenges against federal land use plans. Recent federal actions, such as the draft BLM Rock Springs Management Plan, underscore the necessity of proactive measures to safeguard Wyoming's interests. I voted for the bill, but I have grave

concerns about it. It appears to violate the separation of powers provision in the Wyoming Constitution, as it gives the Legislature authorities generally granted to the executive branch. I expect this bill to be vetoed by the Governor.

Tomorrow we will introduce the draft budget bill from Joint Conference Committee 2 to the House, and hopefully pass a budget on the last scheduled day of the budget session. I served on this House conference committee, and I believe we struck a good compromise with the Senate.

Please don't hesitate to contact me at albert@albertsommers.com.