

## Freedom Caucus Parlor Tricks

Some of my constituents have received negative robo calls, texts, door hangers and mailers accusing me of selling land to the Chinese, letting illegal aliens utilize out-of-state IDs, and more. This mudslinging occurs when opponents fail to focus on their goals for Wyoming.

By examining just these two accusations more carefully, I hope to show that my opponents' claims about me should not be trusted.

- **First, the notion that I and other legislators have sold Wyoming to the Chinese:**

Last session, bills aimed at protecting land from foreign enemies ([SF0102](#), [SJ0002](#), [SF0077](#)) were debated in committee. As Speaker of the House, I sent these to the experienced Appropriations Committee, which ultimately passed SF0077. This bill protects critical infrastructure by requiring county clerks to report property transactions to Homeland Security and the Division of Criminal Investigation, and authorizes these offices to investigate land transactions that threaten critical infrastructure. SF0077 passed and was signed into law; the other bills didn't pass the committee, because SF0077 was deemed sufficient. **I supported SF077 to protect Wyoming's critical infrastructure.**

A motion to bypass the committee and bring SF102 and SJ002 directly to the House floor failed. I voted against it because I do not support procedural motions that circumvent and disrespect the legislative process and public comment.

Currently, the Wyoming Constitution (Article 1, Section 29) prohibits discrimination between resident aliens and citizens in property matters, preventing a ban on foreign land ownership. SJ002 aimed to amend the Constitution to restrict foreign adversaries from owning land, but posed risks to Southwest Wyoming jobs and Wyoming's economy by potentially affecting existing Turkish-owned trona mines. Also consider that Encana, Ultra, British Petroleum (BP) and Shell were or are foreign-owned oil and gas companies that have operated in Wyoming.

I oppose foreign nations owning Wyoming land, but support trade offices. I oppose foreign ownership of farm and ranch land that would compromise our food supply. However, good people from other nations have and do own ranches in Wyoming. One long-time Sublette County rancher is a Scottish citizen. She came to Wyoming from Scotland to teach school. She married a rancher and has been a pillar of our community for decades. **Legislators must consider the unintended consequences of laws.**

- **Second, the notion that I and other legislators voted against a bill that blocks illegal aliens from driving in Wyoming or receiving a Wyoming ID:**

The bill in question was likely [SF0120](#). I assigned this bill to the Corporations Committee, which scheduled a hearing for the bill. However, the primary sponsor, Senator Bouchard,

## Freedom Caucus Parlor Tricks

did not show up to present the bill, and none of his House sponsors stepped forward, either.

The committee had plenty of other work to do, so they set the bill aside. Once again, there was a motion to pull the bill from the committee and send it directly to the House floor for debate. Once again, this motion failed; I voted against the motion.

If sponsors do not care enough about their bill to present it to the committee, why would we vote to override normal rules to pull the bill out of the committee? During my six terms in the House, I have always respected the will of committees, floor leaders, and presiding officers, and have not supported motions to pull bills out of their hands. Committee chairmen, floor leaders and presiding officers must manage time, and time is our enemy during a session – especially during a short Budget Session.

So, what did the Legislature do to address Border security? We put money in the State Budget to reimburse Wyoming local law enforcement agencies that incur expenses associated with assisting border-state law enforcement to secure our nation's southern border. **Unlike my opponent's friends in the Freedom Caucus, I voted FOR the budget that supports Wyoming law enforcement efforts to secure our borders from illegal aliens.**

The Appropriations Committee continues to examine the foreign ownership issue during their interim work underway right now.

**The motions to pull these bills from committees was a political parlor trick by the Freedom Caucus for campaign fodder in this election. Don't be fooled. Contact me at 307-360-7060 or <https://www.albertsommers.co/> for questions or comments.**