

News Release



WYOMING SENATE DISTRICT 3

FOR RELEASE Immediately
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2020 BUDGET SESSION BEGINS

CHEYENNE – Senator Cheri Steinmetz (R-Lingle), representing District 3, plans to make the biennial budget a top focus while addressing other pressing issues in the state during Wyoming Legislature’s 2020 Budget Session. The 65th Wyoming Legislature has moved back into the Capitol to conduct business on behalf to the citizens of the State beginning on February 10th at 10:00 am.

“Monday will begin the session with the State of the State from the governor with the Legislature beginning work in the afternoon. This year bills have to pass a two-thirds introduction vote in order for them to be referred to committee. This process only happens during the budget session.” Steinmetz explained.

Steinmetz will run three Senate Files this year which are still awaiting numbering, their titles are Mineral Royalty Grant and Loan Qualification, Evaluating the Tax Equivalency of Federal Land in Wyoming, and Born Alive- Infant Means of Care.

“Mineral Royalty Grant and Loan Qualification is legislation that would add irrigation districts to the list of special districts eligible to receive MRG funding through the State Land and Investment Board which is comprised of the Governor, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Auditor. SLIB awards these funds in cases of emergencies across the state.”

“Evaluating the Tax Equivalency of Federal Land in Wyoming would create a real-time land appraisal system enabling the State of Wyoming to appraise and evaluate federal lands in order to estimate tax equivalency of lands controlled by the federal government within the state. Wyoming receives PILT, which is Payment In Lieu of Taxes –from the federal government for these lands. This legislation would allow us to evaluate what the

federal government is paying in PILT and what the land would be worth if it were privately held as a tax base for our local counties, cities and the State of Wyoming. Once we have this information in hand, we can seek a fair PILT payments.”

“Born Alive -Infant Means of Care is legislation designed to clarify existing statute to require that an infant born alive during an abortion be given medical treatment,” Steinmetz said. “While we might have spirited debates on the floor about when life begins and how pregnancy affects both the rights of the mother and the child, it is my hope we can all agree that once the child is born, all rights apply equally under the law. The Wyoming Constitution, Article 1, Section 2, Equality of All, it states: in their inherent right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, all members of the human race are equal.”

Steinmetz added she will also focus on an amendment to the OMNIBUS Water Construction Bill in response to the irrigation tunnel collapse last summer.

“We will be proposing an amendment the OMNIBUS Water Construction Bill by adding a \$200,000 for a planning and design grant for Goshen Irrigation District to pay for engineering on the permanent repair to Tunnels 1 and 2. The Construction Bill will start in the House this year, so I have asked Chairman Hans Hunt to run the amendment for us in the House Ag Committee. ”

“This will be an interesting session as we are coming into an approximately \$500 million shortfall for the biennia with regard to education funding,” Steinmetz said. “The debates on tax increases, Constitutional rights associated with self-defense, and the proper size and scope of government have already begun. We are receiving record amounts of email as the public weighs in on these important issues. I will always defend the Constitutional rights of Wyoming citizens and seek to right size government and find other means of revenue rather than raising taxes. Tax increases are not the solution.”

About Senator Cheri Steinmetz:

Sen. Steinmetz represents Goshen, Niobrara, and Weston counties. She is a member of the following Senate committees: Agriculture, State and Public Lands & Water Resources; Transportation, Highways, & Military Affairs; and the Select Committee on Legislative Facilities, Technology and Process. She began serving in the Wyoming State Senate in 2019. Previously, Sen. Steinmetz represented House District 5 from 2015 to 2018. More information may be found at wyoleg.gov.

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