

News Release



WYOMING SENATE DISTRICT 3

FOR RELEASE Immediately
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SENATE PASSES THIRD READING OF BUDGET, MEETS WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS

LINGLE – Friday, Feb. 25, was the last day for bills to be heard by Committee of the Whole in the House of Origin, Senator Cheri Steinmetz reported this week. As the Session continues, bills from the House will cross over to the Senate, and Senate files will cross over to the House.

“We have already received the Redistricting Bill from the House, which is House Bill 100,” Senator Steinmetz said. “This bill contains a 62-House member and 31-Senate member plan, which adds three legislators to the current makeup of the legislature. Redistricting will be debated in the Senate in the coming week. Senator Scott has also introduced a 30-House, 60-Senate plan, which will surely enter the discussion.”

In other bill news, senators heard Senate File 36 Pharmacy Benefit Managers - a bill intended to correct the imbalance in the pharmacy system to ensure small local pharmacists are not put out of business by deep price discounts; and Senate File 47 Carbon Sequestration and Storage Liability, which creates a 20-year liability for companies in the carbon capture business.

Senator Steinmetz announced Senate File 102 Second Amendment Protection Act passed the Senate on third reading and is headed to the House.

“We were very thankful to see the police chiefs and sheriffs who came to attend a press conference in support of the SAPA Bill SF102,” Senator Steinmetz said. “It was great to visit and have breakfast with some of our local police officers.”

In addition, Senate File 103 Education-Limitations Teaching on Critical Race History and Senate File 97 Change in Party Affiliation both passed third reading in the Senate; Senate File 62 Civics Transparency Act, which requires civics curriculum to be posted online for the public and parents to see, passed Committee of the Whole on first reading (this bill is being opposed by the Wyoming Education Association); and Senate File 82 Supplemental Water Bill passed Committee of the Whole.

“(Senate File 82) is the bill with appropriations for supplemental water projects, such as Goshen Irrigation District (GID), LaPrele, and the storage water in Fontenelle Reservoir,” Senator Steinmetz said.

Senate File 81 Clarification of Existing State Ownership of Water declares that under the Wyoming Constitution, the State of Wyoming owns the groundwater, also passed Committee of the Whole. This is a preemptive move by the Legislature, as we see the Biden administration poised to change the definition of Waters of the United States once again, Senator Steinmetz said.

“This week, Cheyenne hosted the County Commissioners and County Clerks as their associations were in town to have dinner with their respective legislators to visit about bills and issues affecting local

government,” Senator Steinmetz said. “It’s always good to get together with our other local officials and talk about what’s going on and how we can help our communities.”

Friday marked the third reading of the budget.

“On second and third reading of the budget, we defended against Medicaid Expansion in a budget amendment,” Senator Steinmetz said. “However, we were able to get important amendments into the budget, as well. On third reading in the Senate, we passed an amendment to rebase rates for reimbursement for St. Joseph's Children's Home.

“We also passed an amendment to defund the College of Gender Studies at the University of Wyoming. The program was being utilized as a degree program by only five students in total for a price tag of \$1.4 million and bragged of teaching intersectional environmentalism and ecofeminism applying decolonial, First Nation, and indigenous perspectives and connecting crip, queer, critical race and ethnic studies approaches to place, environments, and the land. I do not believe this is an appropriate use of public funds at the University of Wyoming. It is time we move back to the land grant mission of the college, which centers on Agriculture and Engineering.”

Following third reading, the budget is passed out of the Senate to the Conference Committee with the House to discuss the two differing positions.

“Usually, the House and Senate pass different amendments, which require the mirror budget bills go to a Conference Committee to iron out the differences between the two bodies,” Senator Steinmetz explained. “Then the Conference Committee will come back to the floor of each respective body for approval of the Joint Conference Committee recommendation.

“We still have a long way to go on the budget and on all of the bills as we start hearing the House bills coming over to the Senate. When the Legislature is done with its work, the bills will make their way to the Governor’s office for final approval.”

As always, you can find more information about the Legislature, track bills, or watch the Session live at wyoleg.gov.

About Senator Cheri Steinmetz:

Senator Steinmetz represents Goshen, Niobrara, and Weston counties. She is a member of the Appropriations Committee and previously served on 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, Senator Steinmetz represented House District 5 from 2015 to 2018. More information may be found at wyoleg.gov.

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