

# News Release

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## WYOMING SENATE DISTRICT 3

FOR RELEASE                      Immediately  
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### Property Taxes and Crossover

**CHEYENNE** – The citizens' cry for property tax reductions is resounding throughout Senate District 3 and the entire State of Wyoming. From senior citizens on fixed incomes, to young families trying to make ends meet, all are feeling the effects of inflation and struggling to pay bills, fill their gas tanks and buy groceries. This clear directive from the people, some of which gathered enough signatures to place property tax reduction on the ballot in 2026, must not be ignored by elected representatives at any level of government. **Property taxes are mostly paid to the counties, special districts, and schools, however, schools are constitutionally mandated to be funded, so they will see no decrease and be backfilled by the School Foundation Program Account.**

Today, I'd like to address two of the tax bills that seem to be the frontrunners in the property tax reduction discussion. The first one is HB0169. This bill has already passed the House and would be effective immediately in tax years 2025-2026 with a sunset in 2026. The exemption percentage would be 50 percent of the first \$1 million of residential property. The bill excludes utilizing the long-term homeowner's exemption, so a person could only use one or the other. HB169 is backfilled by \$225 million - \$125 million from the general fund, and \$100 million from the Legislative Stabilization Account, or the Rainy-Day Fund.

The next bill which has passed the Senate is SF0069. This bill is effective immediately for the 2025-2026 year with a sunset in 2026. SF69 passed with a 50 percent reduction of the first \$1 million of the portion of your single-family residential and the associated land. Unfortunately, and even though many of us representing hardship counties offered several amendments, SF69 passed with no backfill at this time, however, is yet to be considered in the House.

Again, HB0169 would hold the counties and special districts harmless, whereas the SF69 has no backfill. **In the third reading of the budget, the Senate passed an amendment to backfill hospital districts, EMS districts, fire districts and senior center districts.**

Monday Feb. 10, 2025 is the last day for Committee of the Whole in the house of origin, which means Tuesday the process starts over with Senate files being heard in House committees and vice versa.

### **Sponsored Legislation:**

SF0084 Country of Origin Label USA Beef has passed the Senate and awaits introduction in the House. This is a bill that requires any beef born, raised, and slaughtered in the United States be labeled and clearly identified with some form of label that is "USA" or "Local Beef".

SF0064 Wyoming Opposes Mandatory ID Devices for Livestock passed third reading on Monday. With only one no-vote, it is headed to the House for introduction. This bill would formalize Wyoming's opposition to mandatory EID in livestock.

SF0092 Make Carbon Dioxide Great Again - No Net Zero failed for a lack of a motion in the Minerals Committee. This bill would have required that CO2 be managed as a resource, not a contaminant or pollutant, and it would have repealed Wyoming's low-carbon emissions standards.

Another bill that failed in the Minerals Committee was SF0083 Large Energy Project Funding - Legislative Approval, which would have required all large energy projects to have the approval of the legislature, rather than the governor using money from his slush fund on these projects. This, too, died in the Minerals Committee for a lack of a motion on the bill.

SF0124 Illegal Immigration Identify, Report, Detain and Deport is on Committee of the whole on Monday. This bill addresses aiding and abetting illegal immigrants, restricting public benefits and employment. It will also have amendments offered by the County Commissioners Association and the Police Chiefs and Sheriffs Association to make it work for their agencies. The bill will also include \$1 million to reimburse local law enforcement for potential funding gaps and anti-terrorism training.

SF0125 Defining Health and Protecting the People's Welfare is on Committee of the Whole on Monday. The bill seeks to define healthcare and what it is not.

SF0103 Terminating and Defunding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion prohibits the use of funds for DEI at all levels of government, state agencies, the University of Wyoming, and community colleges. This bill is on Third reading and final passage in the Senate on Monday.

### **Items of note:**

Thursday, Feb. 6, I attended the House Agriculture, State and Public Lands & Water Resources Committee to help present the Omnibus Water Bill - Construction. This annual legislation is filled with good projects, that are construction and rehabilitation related projects associated with water development across the State of Wyoming. Of note this year,

\$20 million of funding for the Goshen irrigation tunnels; and \$60 million for the La Prele dam, which is currently under a breach order and set to be demolished by April 1, 2026.

Wednesday, Feb. 5, in Senate Corporations, we had a lively crowd. We started early at 7:30, and ended at 8:30 p.m. We began with SF0174 Constitutional Apportionment. This bill seeks to have a standing committee of the legislature examine keeping counties whole during redistricting, with representation following county lines.

SF0184 Prohibition on Electronic Voting Machines also had a lively crowd from many counties across the state. This is a mirror to one of the House bills. It is a strict prohibition on the use of the electronic ES&S machines by going strictly to hand counting. This was a 40-page bill that dropped late in the session. This bill failed to receive a motion to proceed because if we wish to make a change this large, the issue would need to be studied as an interim topic. The House also failed a mirror bill for similar reasons. It was still great to see everyone there at the committee meeting and hear their thoughts and concerns.

In Labor and Health Committee, we heard SF0175 Unemployment Insurance. This bill seeks to drop the number of months of benefits from 26 to 20 months for people who are unemployed and seeking a job.

### **Understanding Wyoming's Legislative Process**

Wyoming's legislative process is designed to ensure transparency, accountability, and public participation. The Legislature meets annually, with a 20-day budget session held in even-numbered years and a 40-day general session in odd-numbered years. Bills are introduced in either the Senate or House, where they undergo three readings. Each bill is assigned to a committee for detailed review and public testimony. After committee review, the bill returns to the floor for debate and potential amendments. If passed in one chamber, it moves to the other chamber for the same process.

Once both chambers pass a bill, any differences are reconciled before the final version is sent to the Governor for approval or veto. Public involvement is encouraged throughout, with opportunities to testify in committees, contact legislators, and participate in public hearings. You can contact your legislator, watch the session live or participate via zoom at [wyoleg.gov](http://wyoleg.gov).

### **Stay Informed**

Wyoming citizens are encouraged to stay informed and engaged with the legislative process by tracking bills, contacting your legislators and watching live sessions at [wyoleg.gov](http://wyoleg.gov).

### **About the Wyoming Legislature:**

The Wyoming State Legislature is a citizen-run government body that meets annually to address state policy and budget matters. The legislature consists of a Senate with 31 members and a House of Representatives with 62 members, all dedicated to representing the interests of Wyoming's citizens.

**About Senator Cheri Steinmetz:**

Senator Cheri Steinmetz serves Senate District 3 and is committed to advocating for agriculture, water rights, and rural development issues. Senator Steinmetz represents Goshen, Niobrara and Weston Counties.

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