

News Release



WYOMING SENATE DISTRICT 3

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE FROM SENATOR STEINMETZ: PRE-SESSION REPORT

Now, more than ever, Wyoming needs strong leaders to advance the principles of liberty in our state and nation. Wyoming is uniquely positioned to lead the United States back to energy and agricultural dominance, to reject the woke agenda of the radical left and to strengthen traditional family values and virtue. I will be introducing legislation to address these issues and more. Stay tuned! I am committed to working with fellow legislators to govern Wyoming and turn the tide back to common-sense conservatism, which places value on the individual and the consent of the governed through transparency and accountability. There is no better place to call home than Wyoming. I am truly blessed, immensely thankful and fiercely devoted to protecting our citizens, our state and our way of life.

America and Wyoming have given their representatives at all levels of government a mandate, as they overwhelmingly elected Republicans to govern as Republicans. In Wyoming, that means to "Govern Red" in accordance with the Republican Party Platform as passed by the grassroots Republicans across the state. The Wyoming House of Representatives has clearly changed to better reflect the values of the people of Wyoming. There is no time to waste as we steward the rare opportunity we have been given to Make America Great Again and Make Wyoming Great Again!

It has been my honor to serve as Chairman of the Agriculture State and Public Lands and Water Resources Committee and Select Water Committee for the last two years. We had solid committees that were able to accomplish much. I have provided a few highlights in this update.

Select Water Committee Funding for Aging Irrigation Infrastructure:

At our final interim meeting of the Select Water Committee, I was thankful fellow Legislators supported my amendment to the Omnibus Construction Bill, which added \$20 million to fund the deficit in the Goshen Irrigation District (GID) project to permanently repair the failing tunnels which collapsed in 2019. In 2021, we passed a supplemental water bill which appropriated \$21.3 million to GID for the permanent repair and \$30 million for the LaPrele Dam rebuild. In December, the Committee also allocated much needed additional funding for the rebuilding of the LaPrele Dam by providing another \$60 million to the project and passed legislation to protect underlying water rights from abandonment during the process. These two projects are examples of the current liabilities associated with aging irrigation infrastructure throughout Wyoming and the West. We must remain vigilant to shepherd this critical funding through the legislative process and see it signed by the Governor.

Agriculture State and Public Lands and Water Resources Committee:

The Agriculture Committee ended the year with a huge win for the State of Wyoming, as we worked with the Wyoming Livestock Board Commissioners to pass two resolutions to protect livestock owners from the USDA/APHIS rule mandating Electronic Identification Devices (EID) in Cattle and Bison which went into effect Nov 5, 2024. At our last meeting, the Ag Committee passed a bill directing the Livestock board to enter into agreements with other states to maintain "business as usual" under the current traceability systems which are far superior and have worked for decades. In order to act immediately, I took the concept to the Livestock Board Commissioners. Two resolutions were passed by the Livestock Board Commissioners:

one directed the Livestock board director and State Vet to enter agreements with other states to continue “business as usual” and the other stated their opposition to the EID mandate. I have personally spoken with legislators from seven states who wish to oppose the EID mandate and continue business as usual following the lead of Wyoming. A heartfelt thank you to the commissioners for passing these important resolutions!

Below you will find a partial list of bills the Agriculture Committee worked on this year:

1. **Eminent Domain Energy Collector Systems Passed in September:** The committee has been working for two years to strengthen private property rights and limit eminent domain for energy collector systems, especially in light of the Green New Deal subsidies allowing wind and solar to explode in Wyoming. The bill prohibits ALL use of eminent domain for energy collector systems in general, with the exception of public utilities. This is the strongest protection we could pass, as the other bill being considered allowed 85% of land mass or landowners to force eminent domain on 15% of their neighbors. This bill failed in November because the bill passed in September was superior. You might recall, this whole effort began because Governor Gordon vetoed the nine-year moratorium on eminent domain for wind collector lines, which was a bill run by Representative Slagle and passed by the Legislature in 2021. Last year, both of the bills addressing eminent domain were passed in committee, even though they conflict with one another, however, the Senate President refused to allow them to be assigned to committee.
2. **Eminent Domain CO2 Pipelines Failed in November:** I had this bill drafted for our last meeting. Unfortunately, this bill was voted down in committee. I have asked a Senator on the Ag committee to bring it as a private bill. It is of the utmost importance, and I fully support its passage.
3. **Prohibition of Foreign Adversaries Owning Land in Wyoming Passed in November:** Although Management Council stripped this topic from the Ag Committee, I resurrected my personal bill from last session, which was a Constitutional Amendment that allows voters the opportunity to amend the Constitution in order to prevent Foreign Adversaries from owning land in Wyoming.
4. **Prohibition on Natural Asset Companies Passed in November:** Protecting Wyoming Lands Act mirrors Representative Hageman’s bill Protecting America’s Lands Act. The Act prohibits natural assets within Wyoming from being sold on the New York Stock Exchange.
5. **Federal Overreach Passed in November:** The committee resurrected the bill allowing the Legislature to take legal action against federal overreach, which was vetoed by the Governor last session. The bill provided \$75 million to sue the federal government. Many members of the Ag Committee signed the Amicus Brief supporting Utah’s lawsuit against the federal government regarding the transfer of land, myself included. I commend Senator Bob Ide, Representative Ken Ivory of Utah and Mountain States Legal for working diligently on this issue.
6. **EID Mandate Exemption; MOU with other States Passed in November:** After considerable research, I discovered that there was a caveat in the EID rule that allowed states to enter into state-to-state agreements regarding traceability. For this reason, the Ag Committee voted to sponsor a bill requiring the Livestock board to pursue MOUs with other states to conduct business as usual regarding disease traceability. The Livestock board commission passed a resolution to begin the state-to-state agreement process.

As always, you can watch the session online, track bills, contact the Legislature and stay up to date on all happenings at wyoleg.gov. I will continue to update my social media and send out weekly updates during the session. I am always available, accessible and accountable to you. Please feel free to reach out or sign up for my newsletter at cheri.steinmetz@wyoleg.gov by sending me an email or sign up on my Facebook page.

About Senator Cheri Steinmetz:

Senator Steinmetz represents Goshen, Niobrara, and Weston counties.

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