

News Release



WYOMING SENATE DISTRICT 3

FOR RELEASE Immediately
CONTACT Senator Cheri E. Steinmetz
TO REACH (307) 534-5342

Legislative Update from Senator Steinmetz

Wyoming Supplemental Budget and Key Legislative Developments

CHEYENNE - The 2025 SF0001 Supplemental Budget Bill includes significant investments in fire mitigation and disaster response. The bill authorizes up to \$30 million in borrowing from the Legislative Stabilization Reserve Account (LSRA) to cover wildfire suppression costs, an increase from the previous \$20 million authorization. Additionally, \$10 million is appropriated to the Municipal Solid Waste Cease and Transfer Grant Account, supporting local governments' needs for these grants. The Office of State Lands and Investments receives \$40 million for county emergency suppression, with an additional \$2.75 million allocated specifically for direct fire response, funding contract and seasonal firefighting staff. This funding is complemented by \$4.82 million dedicated to the Department of Environmental Quality's solid waste management efforts.

The bill establishes a Natural Disaster Mitigation Loan Program, funded through the LSRA, with an aggregate cap of \$100 million for loans. These loans, available to both governmental entities and private individuals, are intended for activities such as reforestation, fence and infrastructure repair, habitat restoration, and fire mitigation projects. Loans will carry a 2% interest rate with repayment terms of up to 20 years and require collateral, including land, equipment, or other assets. Additionally, the Natural Resource Litigation Account is appropriated \$3.6 million to support legal actions related to natural resource management, including cases that influence wildfire policy and federal land management decisions affecting fire-prone areas.

Regarding staffing, the bill authorizes a net increase of nine full-time positions (FTEs) while reducing eight part-time positions across various state agencies. Key additions include roles in emergency management, public health, and resource oversight. For example, the Department of Corrections receives funding for four new full-time employees to enhance operational support, while the Department of Health adds two full-time positions for behavioral health and public safety coordination. The Wyoming Gaming Commission is authorized to hire up to five new at-will employee contract positions to support race day staffing and compliance efforts. These additions aim to strengthen the state's capacity to

manage growing demands in emergency response, public safety, and resource management, reflecting Wyoming's commitment to both fiscal responsibility and strategic workforce development.

The fiscal overview of the supplemental budget reflects Wyoming's balanced approach to fiscal management. The bill appropriates \$129,568,851 from the General Fund, along with \$113,167,621 from the School Foundation Program Account. It includes targeted allocations from other sources such as \$6,056,736 in Federal Funds, \$2,217,326 in Special Revenue Funds, \$293,200 from Internal Service Funds, \$3 million from the Wyoming Tourism Reserve and Projects Account, \$500,000 from the Game and Fish Fund, and \$420,000 from other designated funds. Importantly, the budget also includes a \$100 million reversion from prior appropriations in the LSRA and General Fund back to the Budget Reserve Account, as well as a \$70 million transfer from the LSRA.

The supplemental budget is specifically designed to address unforeseen circumstances and emergencies that arise outside the scope of the biennial budget cycle. Its purpose is to provide the flexibility needed to respond to emergent issues such as natural disasters, public health crises, and unexpected operational demands. This focus is why the legislature opted to move school capital construction funding to a separate bill, ensuring that long-term infrastructure projects are managed through a distinct process, while the supplemental budget remains responsive to immediate, unanticipated needs.

SF0001 will complete its first reading in the Senate on Monday, February 3, 2025, and will be open for amendments from the floor of the Senate during the second and third readings.

Update on Senator Steinmetz's Sponsored Legislation

Public testimony is available in person or via Zoom.

- **SF0084 - Country of Origin Label - USA Beef:** Passed the Senate and awaits introduction in the House. This bill requires beef to be clearly identified with an indicator such as "USA" or "local" if the beef is born, raised, slaughtered, and processed exclusively in the USA.
- **SF0064 - Wyoming Opposes Mandatory ID Devices for Livestock:** On its third and final reading in the Senate on Monday, February 3, 2025. If passed, this bill will formalize Wyoming's opposition to mandatory Electronic Identification Devices (EID) and require the Livestock Board to inform livestock owners of their rights regarding voluntary identification.
- **SF0092 - Make Carbon Dioxide Great Again: No Net Zero:** Scheduled for Monday, February 3, 2025, at 12 PM in the Senate Minerals Committee. This bill requires that CO2 be managed as a resource, not a contaminant or pollutant, and repeals Wyoming's low carbon emission standards.

- **SF0124 - Illegal Immigration: Identify, Report, Detain, and Deport:** Scheduled for Senate Judiciary on Tuesday, February 4, 2025, at 12 PM. This bill addresses aiding and abetting illegal immigrants, restricting public benefits and employment. I am offering amendments, including \$1 million to reimburse local law enforcement for potential funding gaps and anti-terrorism training.
- **SF0125 - Defining Health and Protecting the People's Welfare:** Scheduled for the Labor Health Committee on Wednesday, February 5, 2025, at 12 PM. 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, and the University of Wyoming and Community Colleges. This bill passed committee and will be on first reading on the Senate floor this week.
- **SF0083 Large energy project funding-legislative approval** required legislative approval rather than just the Governor and his agencies. Reasserted legislative authority to appropriate funds and weigh in on energy policy. Died in Minerals Committee for lack of a motion on the bill.

Consequential Legislation Passing Out of the Senate and Received for Introduction in the House:

- **SF0005 - School District Flashing Lights:** Authorizes school vehicles (other than buses) transporting children to have flashing lights.
- **SF0011 - Use of Fraudulent Documents to Possess Property:** Targets property theft through fraudulent documentation.
- **SF0019 - Impact Assistance Payments:** Raises rates for counties impacted by industrial development.
- **SF0023 - Handicap Placard - Health Care Providers:** Expands authority to request handicap status to physician assistants, physical therapists, podiatrists, and optometrists.
- **SF0060 - Sales Tax Distribution Rates:** Revises the sales tax formula, increasing the share for local governments from 31% to 35%, while the state's share decreases from 69% to 65%.
- **SF0069 - Homeowners Property Tax Exemption:** Reduces property tax on residences and associated land by 25% (amended from 50%). This reduction could severely impact hardship counties and cities without a backfill mechanism.
- **SF0074 - Immunity for Drug Overdose:** Provides immunity for overdose victims and reporters for up to two occurrences per year, after which treatment is required.

- **SF0096** - Wyoming Gold Act: Requires the State Treasurer to hold at least \$10 million in special legal tender, encourages investment in precious metals, and initiates a study on accepting payments in gold and silver.
 - **SF0109** - Open Enrollment School District: Allows students to choose their school, with transportation outside district boundaries not provided.
 - **SF0122** - Voyeurism Sex Offender Registration: Requires individuals convicted of voyeurism involving minors to register as sex offenders for 10 years.
 - **SJ003** - Resolution Commemorating Nellie Taylor Ross: Recognizes the 100th anniversary of Nellie Taylor Ross becoming the first woman governor of Wyoming and the first woman governor in the United States.
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Understanding Wyoming's Legislative Process

Wyoming's legislative process is designed to ensure transparency, accountability, and public participation. The Legislature meets annually, with a 40-day general session held in even-numbered years and a 20-day budget 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.

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.

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.

ICYMI (In Case You Missed It) Senator Cheri Steinmetz in the news:

Senator Cheri Steinmetz's website: [Wyoming Senator Cheri Steinmetz SD3](#)

Cowboy State Daily: [Senate Committee Advances Bill Banning DEI Mandates In Wyoming Government | Cowboy State Daily](#)

Wyoming Tribune Eagle: [Senate: Homeowner property tax cut should be 25%, not 50% | Local News | wyomingnews.com](#)

Wyoming Family Alliance: [Pro-Family Bills: Week Three Legislative Recap & Updates 2025](#)

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