

# News Release

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## WYOMING SENATE DISTRICT 3

**FOR RELEASE**                      Immediately

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## LEGISLATURE CONTINUES WORK

**CHEYENNE** – On Monday, Jan. 16, the State Senate adopted its permanent rules for the 67<sup>th</sup> Wyoming legislature and immediately began work with the bills coming out of committee.

The Senate Agriculture, State and Public Lands and Water Resources Committee has been busy.

**SF0028 Livestock Infectious Disease Control Tribal Inclusion** provides a framework for the State of Wyoming to work with the tribal governments on diseases, specifically brucellosis, in livestock,” Senator Cheri Steinmetz said. “This is an important bill for the retention of Wyoming brucellosis free status and producers across the state.”

“Additionally, **SF0068 Prescriptive Easement for Water Conveyances** is another bill dealing with subdivisions for the most part, and ditches, pipelines, and those things coming across one property to get to another and making sure that water-right holder has the ability to get their water and maintain the conveyance that supplies it,” Senator Steinmetz said.

**SF0096 Omnibus Water Bill Planning Administration** is an annual bill appropriated from the state’s water development accounts.

“The most significant portion of this bill this year is taking the board of control off the water development budget and funding them out of the traditional source, which has been the state engineer’s office,” Senator Steinmetz said. “This will free up another \$7 million per year (\$14 million biennially) to be used on projects for our municipalities and irrigation districts across the state.”

**SF0082 Eligible Water and Sewer Projects Funding** is a continuation of the America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) direct money with leftover funds being available. This would appropriate another \$39.3 million for local water and sewer projects available for local governments who already applied but were not awarded funds.

“Wednesday, we were fortunate to see our own congresswoman Harriet Hageman as she addressed both bodies in the House and Senate as she returns home for town halls to visit with her constituents,” Senator Steinmetz said. “We always appreciate our good congresswoman and we’re looking forward to all the advances she will make in Washington, D.C. on behalf of the State of Wyoming.”

Thursday evening, the Senate Ag Committee held over **SF0028 Livestock Infectious Disease Control Tribal Inclusion**.

“On another note, we had a fencing law that we had talked quite a bit about, and we went ahead and failed that law because we found it was in the wrong section in our fencing statute. We’ve reworked that bill and it is now **SF0137 Subdivisions Fencing Requirements**.”

The bill puts parameters on subdivision fences with minimum requirements, and it requires the subdivider to pay for the fence and for the current landowner within the subdivision to provide for its upkeep.

**Senator Cheri Steinmetz** serves as Chairman of the Agriculture, State and Public Lands and Water Resources Committee and Vice Chairman of the Education Committee. Contact Information: (307)534-5342; e-mail: [cheri.steinmetz@wyoleg.gov](mailto:cheri.steinmetz@wyoleg.gov)

As of Sunday, Jan. 22, the 67th Wyoming Legislature has been in session a total of nine days. In that time, the legislative offices have drafted nearly 700 bills.

“The House has almost 200 proposed bills that have been numbered, and the Senate has about 150 bills numbered,” Representative Scott Smith said. “Please take time to go to the Wyoming Legislature website and take a look at the bills and write the legislature on the ones that may concern you.”

Bills are beginning to flow through the committees and are being brought before the body.

“The most controversial bill that I voted ‘NO’ on was **HB0007 Underage marriage amendments**. It passed 36-27. In essence, this bill made the legal age of marriage 18.

“There were several issues I had with the bill.

“1. I felt that it took away parental rights. I understand not all people under 18 are mature to marry, but then again, there are grown adults who also fall into that category.

“2. I also didn’t want to cause legal problems for certain religious groups. The groups that came to mind were the Amish or the Mennonites. Their youth seem mature, and they have a very low divorce rate.

“3. I am the product of teen parents and my parents married two weeks after finding out they were expecting me and they have been happily married for 40 years. I hope that this gives you a little insight into why I voted the way that I did.

“4. I think the government needs to regulate less and this doesn’t solve many of the teen issues that were debated on the floor.”

Representative Smith stated he enjoyed congresswoman Hageman’s visit.

“After listening to her speech, it confirmed that we sent the right person to D.C. to fight the federal government on our behalf,” Representative Smith said. “The two committees she has been

appointed to are Judiciary and Natural Resources - both of which are a perfect fit for her. She has big plans, and I'm excited to see congress push back on the federal executive branch. Also, the Judiciary committee will be doing some much-needed investigations.

"One of the biggest things that she is concerned about is the outrageous spending and the national debt. Tough decisions are ahead for her; please keep her in your prayers."

**Representative Scott Smith** serves on the Transportation, Highways, and Military Affairs Committee. Contact Information: (307)575-3742; e-mail: [Scott.Smith@wyoleg.gov](mailto:Scott.Smith@wyoleg.gov)

"We are basically a quarter done with the session, and the House has only passed 26 bills on third reading," Representative Allen Slagle said. "As [Representative Smith] said, we have approximately 700 to look at, so we have another 675 bills that need to be gone through."

Representative Slagle added **HB0093 the Omnibus Water Bill** is now on general file and will be reviewed again several times.

"If you have any concerns let us know," Representative Slagle said. "On Jan. 30, we will be looking at the supplemental budget, and Jan. 31 will be the last day for bills to be introduced in the House."

The House Ag Committee has been working on several bills to clean up the policy of the State Lands' office. The House Ag Committee meets Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

**Representative Allen Slagle** serves on the Agriculture, State and Public Lands and Water Resources Committee. Contact information: (307)306-7384; e-mail: [allen.slagle@wyoleg.gov](mailto:allen.slagle@wyoleg.gov)

More information about the legislative session can be found at [wyoleg.gov](http://wyoleg.gov).

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