

ADVOCACY

Advocating for Wyoming Doctors and their Patients Since 1903

Bills That Passed Both Chambers This Week

- [SF021](#) - Death Certificates: Allows advanced practice registered nurses and/or physician assistants to complete the medical certification of a death certificate.
- [HB017](#): Adult Protective Orders - Time Limit Extension: Extends the permissible period for emergency services from 72 hours to 30 days in adult protective orders.
- [SF062](#) - Telepharmacy amendments: This law allows pharmacies to develop telepharmacy sites where there are no pharmacies for at least 10 miles away.



Goodbye, Farewell, and Amen...

The 2017 Legislative session was a tense one in the Jonah Building, illustrated well [here](#) by Laura Hancock of the Casper Star-Tribune. The need for budget reductions and education funding reform, as well as a large new class of freshmen legislators meant the session, which ended last Friday, at 10:48 p.m. on Friday after over-riding a number of Gov. Matt Mead's line item vetoes, featured an edge not seen in previous years.

Despite the infighting and talk about budget and education, there were some healthcare bills which got time on the floor of both chambers.

[Senate File 88 - Palliative Care](#). The passage of this bill will lead to the development of an advisory committee on palliative care in Wyoming. The Governor will appoint 13 committee members from a number of walks of life including physicians, law enforcement, spiritual leaders, and reps from groups like the American Cancer Society. If you are interested in taking part, let the office in Cheyenne know and we will pass along your name.



WMS Doc of the Day

Thank you to our volunteers who serve the Wyoming Legislature and staff during the session. WMS is proud of our physicians who care for our Senators and Representatives.

- Larry Kirven, MD
- Christian Flanders, MD

Bill Tracker in Review

To see where all of the bills the WMS supported, opposed or tracked this session check out: <https://www.wyomed.org/2017legislative-session>.

What is next?

The last two weeks of the Legislative Session included time for the House and Senate Labor, Health, and Social Services Committees to discuss what topics they would like to study in the interim. The tentative list of topics to be studied in the 2017 interim is [here](#) (topics specific to healthcare are featured on pages one and 11).

For a bill that seemed very likable at first blush, there was an odd amount of controversy surrounding the concept. SF88 squeaked out of the House Labor, Health, and Social Services Committee due to concern that the bills asks WDH to perform more duties without new funding or personnel. Upon third reading in the House there were questions regarding the bill on everything from how to take care of a dying loved one's opioids to concerns that the bill opens the door for Medical Marijuana. Eventually cooler heads prevailed and the bill passed.

Two abortion-related bills passed through the Senate last week - [HB116](#) and [HB182](#). Just to recap, WMS takes no position on abortion. However, WMS does fiercely protect the patient-physician relationship and works to defend the rights of physicians to practice medicine without government intrusion. WMS lobbying efforts around any subject center around these philosophies.

As originally written, HB116 prohibited giving, transferring, selling, and/or distributing aborted fetal tissue or cells for experimentation. Amendments were offered by WMS and to address unintended consequences which would have stopped diagnostic testing inside the circumstances of an abortion, including D&C procedures. Thanks to the fine work of Senator Charlie Scott and Tara Nethercott, the amendments were adopted.

[HB182: Abortion - Ultrasound Information](#), passed the Senate Monday morning. The bill instructs physicians to offer pregnant women the opportunity to view an ultrasound prior to an abortion. WMS opposed this language on principle of preventing government intrusion in the physician-patient relationship and the precedent that passage of this bill would set for including prescriptive clinical measures in statute. The bill includes no enforcement, penalties, or documentation. To see who voted in which direction, click [here](#).

Among the surprises of the Senate's final week was the killing of [HB062 - Immunity for Drug Overdose Reporting](#). The bill would have provided immunity from prosecution of specified offenses under the Wyoming Controlled Substance Act of 1971 to persons who report or experience an emergency drug overdose event. Certain members of the Senate questioned whether the bill would actually save lives, while others felt it offered hard-core drug users the state's blessing to continue using opioids recreationally. The bill flew through committee in the House and Senate before working through the House by a 50-8 vote. The third reading vote that killed the bill was 15-15 in the Senate. Click [here](#) for the vote tally.