

ADVOCACY

Advocating for Wyoming Doctors and their Patients Since 1903

Bills of interest to the Wyoming Medical Society are tracked on a spreadsheet and regularly updated. To access the spreadsheet, [CLICK HERE](#). The WMS Board of Trustees establishes positions on legislation on behalf of the association. Any member is welcome to request that WMS reconsider a position on an issue, or take another issue under review

Status:

Budget Sessions are scheduled to last 20 days and that 20th day falls today, Saturday, March 10. However, it remains to be seen if the Legislature will complete its work in order to adjourn the 2018 session without returning next week to finish business.



Budget Battle Dominates Week

Tensions ran high this final week in Cheyenne on differences in spending philosophies between the Senate and the House. The Legislature started the week with substantial differences on Legislative Stabilization Reserve Account (LSRA) expenditures in K-12 education, \$21.2 million; ENDOW, \$14.7 million; school capital construction, \$15.8 million; and penitentiary capital construction \$20 million. The most serious debate continued to unfold in spending reductions for K-12 funding, which remains a point of primary contention today.

With these differences at the beginning of the week, a budget deal appeared to be a far-fetched aspiration. However, hope was regained for a state budget deal once both chambers agreed to strip all education and capital construction funding out of the budget bill in order to achieve compromise on the rest of government spending for the next biennium. This action means that the bodies must now debate the merits of education and cap-con funding measures separately.

As of writing this update, mid-day Saturday, the House had passed the



WMS Doc of the Day

Thank you to our volunteers who serve the Wyoming Legislature and staff during the session.

- Doug Parks, MD
- Evan Norby, DO
- Amber Moss, DO
- Chris Godwin, DO

Interim Topics of Interest:

The Joint Labor, Health and Social Services Committee convened early Wednesday to discuss topics for the interim. Topics of interest and potential concern to WMS include:

- Transparency in Healthcare
- Locum Contracting Regulations
- Mental Health Parity
- Tobacco Harm Reduction
- Physical Therapy Scope Expansion
- Violence Against Healthcare Workers
- Optometry Scope of Practice Expansion
- Air Ambulance Regulation

conference-version of the Budget and the Senate was still in heated debate. The Senate cannot amend the budget conference report, but can reject concurrence, which would further delay the process by sending the budget bill back to the Joint Conference Committee for debate. Once both chambers come to agreement with signatures of support from the President and Speaker the Governor has three full business days to review the budget, provide line-item vetos or veto the entire budget. If in session, the legislature then has opportunity to override any line-item or full veto with a 2/3 vote in each chamber.

Budget Debate Aside - A Great Session for WMS

The first session update reported that WMS would be monitoring or strongly advocating on 35 bills this budget session. Of those 35, WMS ultimately took vocal positions on 18 and found success on 15 of those calculating to an 83% win-rate for the 2018 Session! Some of our biggest wins included working with bill sponsors to support and push a compromise version of the health care providers - sexual assault legislation, defeating a bill to license naturopaths, preventing the pharmaceutical industry from pushing off-label use of medications and stopping legislation mandating physicians post all fee-schedules to the public and discuss insurance network status with each patient at the time of scheduling and presenting for a visit.

The three bills that WMS supported, but ultimately failed, were measures to increase the state tobacco tax, amend state seatbelt laws, and organ donation training programs for county coroners across the state. While WMS failed to succeed in persuading the legislature to see things our way on those three, we maintained our impressive track record of defeating every single piece of bad legislation that the WMS board of trustees voted to oppose. We owe a big thanks to strong physician voices across the state and the continued respect the legislature holds for the medical profession.



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