

# 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

## Up Next Week:

The House Labor committee will be debating Medicaid birth cost recovery, promotion of pharmaceutical manufacturers off-label use and CHIP administration proposals next week. The Senate will be debating two opioid addiction bills as well as a proposal to authorize certificates of nonviable birth. WMS will keep members informed as these issues progress.



## Funding State Government

The 64th Legislature closed out the first week of the 2018 Budget Session with 330 bills and resolutions filed and posted. The House and Senate collectively weeded out 100 of those bills leaving the bodies to start week two with 230 bills in need of debate and decision. Governor Mead set the tone for the week delivering his eighth and final State of the State address on opening day. Among a myriad of topics the Governor touched on Wyoming healthcare and reiterated his commitment to suicide prevention and mental health in Wyoming along with cautioning the legislature against cutting too much. Governor Mead was clear in conveying his discontent with cuts within the Department of Health that in a lot of ways have maybe gone too far. He asked the body to be mindful of the longterm consequences of cutting preventive service programs and what that will ultimately cost the state and its people.

Budget Sessions last 20 days with the primary purpose being funding state government for the next biennium. The budget bill for the 2019-2020 biennium was released Friday appropriating a total of \$2.9



## 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.

- Dustin Durham, MD
- John Healey, MD
- Larry Kirven, MD
- Kim Westbrook, MD
- Samina Ayub, MD
- David Fall, MD

## How To Connect:

The Wyoming Legislature is beta testing a new website and it's wonderful! To check out the new experience and get acquainted with a far easier way to navigate legislative bills, legislative contacts and session schedules, visit <http://lso.wyoleg.gov/>.

billion from the state's general fund and almost \$1.6 million in federal funds. An additional \$87 million is appropriated from the states Legislative Stabilization Reserve Account (LSRA) and another \$41 million in Tobacco Settlement Funds. Of interest to WMS members is the fact that 33% of the state general fund appropriation is dedicated to services and administration within the Department of Health.

**The WMS Voice in Health Policy** is active as ever this year with the board guiding advocates to monitor or weigh-in on more than 30 pieces of legislation. Of the 35 bills, WMS is closely monitoring 19, supporting 11 and opposing or attempting to significantly amend five. This year marked some major wins for our medical society in the fact that we were able to dissuade legislation that would negatively impact medicine or amend it prior to legislation being formally filed for session debate. Every association strives to reach a space in which they can handle the bulk of legislative concerns prior to the convening of the legislative session and WMS did a great job of achieving that this year thanks to a fantastic membership and leadership team working in partnership with WMS advocacy staff. We closed out the week with 12 of the 35 bills failing to continue in the process either through active lobbying by WMS or through process. Below are some highlights of the past week's activities at the capitol.

**Bills of Interest this week** spanned a broad range of interest areas from work requirements in Medicaid and prescription drug regulation to licensing naturopaths and sexual assault protections specific to healthcare providers. For those interested in more detail on all legislation please never hesitate to call our Director, Sheila Bush, personally or reference the spreadsheet outlining the bills.

HB81 - CHIP - state administration: changes statute which currently requires the Dept. of Health to contract administration of the CHIP program with a private insurance company to allow the Dept. of Health to bring the contract inside the department. BCBS currently administers CHIP and pays physicians greater reimbursement to protect the provider network for CHIP. WMS opposes the bill and remains in strong favor of maintaining the public-private partnership inside CHIP. The bill was heard in committee Friday and will be voted on Monday upon adjournment.

HB99 - Prescription and possession of FDA approved drugs: passed out of committee on Friday afternoon with WMS in strong support of the language ensuring that physicians can write any prescription medication approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

HB151 - Naturopathy licensing board: established the naturopathy licensing board and defined naturopathy as primary care. WMS opposed the legislation contributing to its demise in the House this first week.