

ADVOCACY

| Advocating for Wyoming Doctors and Their Patients Since 1903 |

January 30 - February 3, 2023 ~ Session Update

Prioritizing Good Policy Over Politics

~ personal note from our director ~

The Wyoming Medical Society (WMS) is a nonpartisan organization. Policy positions are established in evidence, look to the expertise of our specialists most impacted, and are always grounded in the longstanding policy platforms of the organization, never partisan politics.

Representing Wyoming's physicians and PAs is an honor and one that often leaves me humbled. Thank you to so many of you who sent heartfelt emails to lawmakers or contacted me to share your concerns and fears. This week, more than ever, I found myself pleading with lawmakers to look to our members and your example. Each of you set aside personal feelings, religious beliefs, and individual politics to create safe environments in which your patients can trust your expertise and find comfort in knowing you'll always put their needs first. It's time for Wyoming lawmakers to learn from you and do what's right for Wyoming.

I know many of you have been listening to the committee and floor debates and are feeling as though medicine is under attack. Lawmakers have characterized our members as "monsters who prey on children and can't be trusted" despite numerous testimony from our own members and advocates passionately refuting such claims. Please stay strong, don't leave, and keep the faith that the Wyoming of old will prevail against the ugliness of today's political rhetoric. We need all of you now more than ever.

My testimony is available on our [YouTube Playlist](#) where you can listen to my attempts to help lawmakers gain clarity inside a space filled with misinformation and fear. My words seek to honor the diverse opinions and thoughts of our members while drawing a bright line between what should be the role of government and what should be left to the experts who have dedicated their lives to the health and well-being of their patients. My goal is always to advocate with integrity, educate in truth, and protect your profession from hateful attempts to undermine Wyoming's faith and trust in you as healers.

If you are a member and find yourself in disagreement with any policy positions or advocacy

guidance set by our Board, please utilize the tools made available to you to make your voice heard within our organization. Each county elects a Trustee to represent them at the state level in addition to **THE WIRE** which is available to any member to seek the opinions of colleagues on issues or request reconsideration of a policy decided by our leadership. Please consider using these opportunities so WMS can remain the strong and respected voice of medicine that we work so hard to foster. WMS remains Wyoming's lone voice for medicine. Let's continue to respectfully work together to protect Wyoming patients and protect ***YOUR VOICE***.

With respect and gratitude,



Mental Healthcare Access - Psychiatric Collaborative Care Sails Through Two More Hurdles in Week 4

[House Bill 140](#), supported by the Wyoming Association of Psychiatric Physicians (WAPP) and WMS passed First and Second Readings in the State House of Representatives this week! No opposition was voiced on First Reading and no amendments were proposed for consideration on Second Reading.

We remain hopeful that the bill won't run into any challenges on Third Reading and will be able to proceed in the process in the Senate.

WMS Legislative Bill Tracker

The WMS team continues to monitor and provide education on a long list of legislative proposals that were identified and prioritized by our leadership.

The due date for filing new bills and having them passed out of committee in the originating chamber passed this week. Monday is yet another due date for bills to be considered on General File. Any bill not passed off General File by adjournment on 2/6 will fail to advance this Session.

*The positions decided by the WMS Board of Trustees are reflected on the WMS Bill Tracker. If you disagree with any position taken by the board, take advantage of the opportunity provided through **THE WIRE** to voice your opinions and thoughts!*



the wire

Wyoming health policy at your fingertips



WMS invested a great deal of time and resources to establish [THE WIRE](#) designed to enable any member, at any time, to take an active role in shaping the policy agenda for the medical society.

- Log into [THE WIRE](#) and see if any proposals have been submitted for review and comment. Once logged in, you can navigate to all the proposals submitted to date by clicking on the **Proposals Archive**.
- Review the comprehensive listing of bills on the [state legislative website](#), or on the [WMS Bill Tracker](#). See if anything catches your attention.
- Submit a proposal in [THE WIRE](#) for voting and comment across the membership for the WMS Board to review prior to next week's meeting in Cheyenne.

Remember, logging into [THE WIRE](#) is easy. Simply use the email on file with WMS and the same password you have set to log into www.wyomed.org for your member account management. If you have any trouble, simply use the Reset Password feature on the site, or contact a member of the WMS staff for assistance at 307-635-2424 or at info@wyomed.org

WMS takes legislative positions in accordance with the organization's [policy platforms](#). Our advocacy work is prioritized around proposals that align with our pursuit of improving:

- Access to Care for Wyoming Patients
- Medical Liability Reform
- Medicaid Programming and Funding
- Physician Recruitment & Loan Repayment
- Medical Education and Residency Training
- Patient Safety, and
- Public Health and Tobacco Prevention
- Protecting the Physician-Patient Relationship



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WMS Doc and PA of the Day

Thank you to WMS Past President and Powell physician, **Dean Bartholomew, MD**, for serving as Doc of the Day this past week.



There are still days available to volunteer for Doc or PA of the Day. WMS is proud of this program which provides a great opportunity for WMS members to provide a valuable service to the legislature and have a front-row seat to the legislative process. Click below to learn more and see what days remain open. Email info@wyomed.org if you're interested in spending a day at the Capitol with us!

Information about Doc and PA of the Day

Bills in Committee in Week Four

Several of the bills being monitored by WMS received debate this week. They are as follows:

1. [Medical prescriptions - off label purposes](#) - Provides immunity from employer or licensure board consequences to prescribers who prescribe medications off-label. **OPPOSE** - Passed Labor/Health committee on a 5-4 vote
2. [Medicaid Federal Medical Assistance Percentage Increase](#) - Requests Congress to increase Wyoming's Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) **SUPPORT** Passed Appropriations committee 7-0
3. [Grace Smith Medical Freedom Act](#) - Requires state and county health officers to provide waivers to immunization requirements for K-12 students upon request. **OPPOSE - Failed to be heard in committee by the due date**
4. [Right of Healthcare Access - Constitutional Amendment](#) - Proposed to amend the Wyoming Constitution to remove the legislature's express authority to determine reasonable and necessary restrictions on a person's right to make healthcare decisions. **SUPPORT - Failed committee 3-2**
5. [Health mandates - CDC and WHO jurisdiction in WY](#) - Prohibits health mandates and requirements to be cited as justification for any recommendations, mandates or requirements by the Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization. **OPPOSE** - Passed Labor/Health Committee 5-4
6. [Endangering children - fentanyl](#) - Adds fentanyl to the list of controlled substances that qualify as a child endangerment offense unless the medication is properly stored and obtained through a valid practitioner's medication order or prescription. **SUPPORT** - Passed Committee 5-0
7. [Chloe's law-children gender changes prohibition](#) - Prohibits physicians from performing procedures or prescribing medications, including puberty blockers, for children related to gender transitioning and gender reassignment. **OPPOSE** - Passed Labor/Health

8. [Vital records - amendments](#) - Provides for a penalty of \$100 and/or 6 months imprisonment for failure to sign and submit a death certificate within 72 hours of death.
MONITOR - Failed to be heard in committee by the due date

How To Connect and Stay Engaged

Use wyoleg.gov to learn more about this year's legislative process. Below are quick links to important information.

[Daily Calendars](#) including floor calendars, audio streams, and committee schedules

[Bill Listing](#) that includes all legislative proposals posted for the 2023 Session

As always, Executive Director Sheila Bush welcomes and invites any and all communication. If you have questions about the status of a bill, want to provide feedback or input on legislation, have questions about using [THE WIRE](#), or want to share your thoughts on any other aspect of the WMS advocacy work, please email her at sheila@wyomed.org or call her cell phone at 307-630-8602.



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