

ADVOCACY

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February 13 - 17, 2023 ~ Session Update

Legislature Greenlights Important Bills in Week 6

Week six was a big week for getting a few important bills across the finish line, one of which was the structure for funding the federally-mandated [988 Suicide Hotline](#). House Bill 65, now Enrolled Act 36, started as a bill to establish a trust fund with a \$46 M appropriation from the Legislative Stabilization Reserve Account (LSRA) to create sustainability funding for the suicide lifeline. After much debate and subsequent amendments in both chambers, the funding was removed. Enrolled Act 36 heads to Governor Gordon's desk as a skeleton of the legal framework for the trust fund to which future money can be appropriated.

The final version of the 988 bill:

- Establishes the legal framework for the trust fund, but no longer includes funding
- Requires the WY Department of Health (WDH) to seek an appropriation to fund the hotline in the next standard budget request
- Contains a five-year sunset which requires legislation to reauthorize the trust fund
- Requires WDH to pursue private and charitable donations to fund as much of the 988 operations as possible
- Requires that the 988 crisis line follow evidence-based practices known to prevent suicide, and
- Prohibits the system from infringing on anyone's individual rights.

In other news, only 14 of the 38 legislative proposals being followed by WMS this year remain active in the process. Four of the bills have completed the process and are on the Governor's desk for signature. Twenty failed either by vote or failing to meet timeline requirements. Eight of the bills defeated were bills that WMS supported. The remaining twelve were bills WMS actively opposed or simply monitored without taking an active position.

The [WMS Bill Tracker](#) has again been reworked to shift all the legislation that has either completed the process or been defeated to the bottom, leaving only those still active in the process at the top. As always, please don't hesitate to contact any county trustee or member of the WMS staff if you have questions or concerns or wish to get involved and testify with WMS.

WMS Legislative Bill Tracker

Mental Healthcare Access - Psychiatric Collaborative Care Earns Unanimous Committee Support in Week 6

[House Bill 140](#), supported by the Wyoming Association of Psychiatric Physicians (WAPP) and WMS earned the support of all five members of the Senate Labor, Health, and Social Services Committee yesterday! We are so thankful to all of our members who had an integral hand in helping this bill in the process thus far.

House Bill 140 represents a physician-led effort to open a new model of healthcare delivery in which medicine can co-locate physical and mental health within the trusted primary care clinic. It has wide coalition support including the Wyoming Business Alliance (WBA), Wyoming Association of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Clinics (WAMHSAC), Wyoming Counseling Association, and more with evidence backing its positive impact on patient outcomes, utilization, and cost.

Please take a moment to thank your legislator for their support if they voted to support this important initiative! Our five yes votes in yesterday's committee included:

- Chairman Fred Baldwin, PA-C
- Eric Barlow
- Anthony Bouchard
- Dan Dockstader, and
- Lynn Hutchings

Action Taken on Bills in Week 6

[School finance - Mental health services](#) Creates a program for school districts to apply for competitive grants to assist in providing mental health services to K-12 public education students. **Carried Over - WMS SUPPORTS**

[Medical prescriptions - off label purposes](#) Provided immunity from employment or licensure action if related to prescribing medications off-label. **FAILED - WMS OPPOSES**

988 suicide prevention - a bill to establish a trust account and associated requirements for sustaining a Wyoming Crisis Lifeline (988). **Awaiting Governor Signature - WMS SUPPORTS**

[Podiatry medical services](#) Authorizes payment for services rendered by a licensed podiatrist within Medicaid. **Awaiting Governor Signature - WMS SUPPORTS**

Plan of safe care - newborns Requires healthcare providers and hospital to develop and comply with plans of safe care for substance-exposed infants and requires reporting to the department of family services. **Passed Committee 6-3 WMS SUPPORTS**

Bills Scheduled for Debate in Week 7

You can Livestream video of the floor and committees via the [Legislature's YouTube Channel](#). The listing below only includes bills WMS is tracking.

House Appropriations. Tuesday - Upon Adjournment

- [SF144](#) - Chloe's law - children gender change prohibition **WMS OPPOSES**

Senate Labor, Health and Social Services. Wednesday 8:00 AM

- [HB4](#) - Medicaid twelve month postpartum coverage **WMS SUPPORTS**



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 to [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
- Public Health and Tobacco Prevention
- Protecting the Physician-Patient Relationship



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WMS Doc and PA of the Day

Thank you to our WMS members who served as Doc of the Day this past week.

- Kris Sherwin, PA-C
- John Winter, MD



- Allison Barnett, PA-C

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

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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