

# MEDIA ADVISORY



## WYOMING LEGISLATIVE SERVICE OFFICE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## SERVICES AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC DURING THE 2004 BUDGET SESSION

**CHEYENNE** – The Wyoming Legislature offers a variety of services to help Wyoming residents actively participate in the upcoming 2004 Budget Session, which convenes on Monday, February 9, 2004. The information below explains services provided by the Wyoming Legislature to ensure the public's participation in the legislative process throughout the 2004 Budget Session. We encourage media outlets to promote these services to the public.

### GENERAL TELEPHONE MESSAGES AND CORRESPONDENCE FOR LEGISLATORS

Individuals who wish to contact a legislator directly during the session, or who want to convey a detailed message to a legislator, should call the Senate Receptionist at 307-777-7711 or the House Receptionist at 307-777-7852. Written mail may be directed to a designated legislator in care of the Wyoming House or Senate, State Capitol, Cheyenne, WY, 82002. Fax messages may be sent to a designated legislator at 307-777-5466.

### CONTACTING LEGISLATORS BY E-MAIL

Members of the public may also wish to contact members of the Wyoming Legislature via e-mail. Many legislators use e-mail to correspond with their constituents and other members of the public. Legislators who can be contacted by e-mail are listed on the Legislature's Web site (<http://legisweb.state.wy.us>).

### VOTER HOTLINE

During the legislative session, individuals can recommend a vote for or against a particular piece of legislation by calling the Voter Hotline. Other than recommending that a legislator vote for or against an identified bill, callers cannot leave a general message for legislators through this service. While it is not possible to speak directly with a legislator on the Voter Hotline, the recommendations are quickly delivered to legislators. The Voter Hotline is a toll-free call within Wyoming at 1-866-996-8683. Local callers within the Cheyenne area should call 777-VOTE (777-8683). The Hotline is operational on days the Legislature is in session from 7:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. or until the Legislature adjourns for the day, whichever is later.

### BILL STATUS HOTLINE

Members of the public can call the Bill Status Information Service toll-free within Wyoming at 1-800-342-9570 to obtain the current status of any bill in the legislative process. This is a very limited service that provides the caller with information about where the bill is in the process, but does not provide information about the details of the legislation. Information will not be provided about the contents or purpose of a bill. In addition, callers cannot leave messages for legislators at this telephone number. This service is available Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. on days the Legislature is in session. Out-of-state callers should dial 307-777-6185 for this service.

### HEARING IMPAIRED SERVICE

Individuals with hearing impairments may call the toll-free Wyoming Relay Service for information on any bill. The telephone number is 1-800-877-9965 for TDD or Text Telephones. The caller should ask the Wyoming Relay Service operator to dial 307-777-6185 to obtain status on bills. This service is available to all Wyoming residents with hearing impairments.

### **INFORMATION ON THE LEGISLATURE'S WEB SITE**

A great deal of legislative information is available electronically through the Wyoming Legislature's Web site (<http://legisweb.state.wy.us>). This site can also be accessed through the State of Wyoming's Web page. During the 2004 Budget Session the Web site will be updated daily with important legislative information, including the text of all introduced, engrossed, and enrolled bills; all roll call votes; Senate and House daily calendars; and standing committee meeting schedules.

### **REAL AUDIO OF LEGISLATIVE PROCEEDINGS**

Live audio proceedings of the Wyoming Senate and the Wyoming House of Representatives are available on the Wyoming Legislature's Web site. Listeners will need to download a copy of the Real Audio Player to listen to the proceedings (a link to download the Player is available on the Legislature's Web site). The Real Audio link will be prominently displayed on the Web site when the session begins and will provide the option of listening to live proceedings, if the House and Senate are convened, or an archive of the last five days of legislative proceedings throughout the session.

### **ELECTRONIC AND PAPER COPIES OF LEGISLATION**

The text of each bill will be posted on the Legislature's Web site as soon as the legislation is assigned a bill number. The text of each bill that passes one house (called "engrossed bills") and bills that are passed by the Legislature (called "enrolled acts") are posted on the site as they are approved. Members of the public who do not have Internet access to obtain copies of bills should call the Legislative Service Office at (307) 777-7881 to request paper copies of legislation. The Office is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on days the Legislature is in session. Paper copies of bills are available to the public for a minimal fee.

### **TRACKING BILL STATUS ELECTRONICALLY**

In addition to the Bill Status Hotline service described above, the Legislature's Web site provides information regarding the current status of each bill under consideration, as well as previous actions on the bill, including all roll call votes, and the text of all amendments offered regarding the bill.

### **SENATE AND HOUSE SCHEDULES**

Calendars for floor proceedings in the Senate and House of Representatives will be available on the Legislature's Web site in the late afternoon for the next day's floor proceedings in each chamber. The calendars include the legislation and the order of consideration of legislation.

### **STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

During the session, when a bill is introduced in either the Senate or the House, it is sent to a standing committee for study and to receive public comment. Members of the public are welcome to attend standing committee meetings and to testify for or against legislation. Individuals who wish to provide written information to the Committee will be requested to fill out a Committee Handout Form at the meeting (copies of the form are also available on the Legislature's Web site). In addition, the public is encouraged to e-mail electronic copies of committee handouts to the Legislative Service Office at [legdocs@state.wy.us](mailto:legdocs@state.wy.us), so staff can provide electronic copies of committee handouts to legislators. A schedule of Standing Committee meetings and the bills that will be considered by each committee for the next legislative working day will be posted on the Legislature's Web site each day in the late afternoon.

### **LEGISLATIVE PROCESS INFORMATIONAL VIDEOS**

To better understand the legislative process, the Wyoming Legislature and Wyoming Public Television have produced two informational videos that explain legislative process and budgeting issues. The Wyoming Legislature has provided every public library, community college library, and K-12 library in Wyoming with copies of these informative videos. *Wyoming's Citizen Legislature: A Guide to Wyoming's Legislative Process* explains how a bill becomes a law, while *Wyoming's Citizen Legislature: The Budget Process*, provides information about the State's budgeting process. – End –