

ATTENDING A LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING?

What to know before you go

Find out everything you need to know about attending committee meetings during the legislative session.

*Remember, policymaking is not a spectator sport - participate!
Please visit our Website for more information.*

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What is the role of a legislative committee?

After a bill is introduced in either the Senate or House, it is sent to a standing committee for further consideration and to receive public comment. It is the committee's job to determine whether the bill should be considered by the full Legislature. The committee can suggest amendments to the bill, approve it for further action by the full Senate or House, or vote against the bill.

Who are the committee members?

A Senate committee is made up of five members and a House committee has nine. These committee members are appointed by the President and Speaker at the beginning of each biennium. The chairman controls the meeting and ensures the orderly flow of committee proceedings.

Can I attend any committee meetings?

The Legislature wants you to be an active participant in the legislative process, so you are always welcome to attend committee meetings. You can have direct input on proposed legislation at committee meetings. If you are interested in a particular bill, you are encouraged to attend the committee meeting when the bill is scheduled for a hearing. Seating is limited so you may want to arrive early.

How do I know when a bill is being heard in committee?

Once a bill has been referred to a committee, the committee chairman may set a date and time to "hear" the bill. You can track when bills are being considered by looking at the committee's daily schedule. Schedules can be found on the

committee room door, in the Senate and House lobbies, the Capitol Rotunda, or by checking the committee meeting schedule on the Wyoming Legislature's Website at: <http://legisweb.state.wy.us>.

What is the order of business in a hearing?

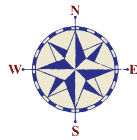
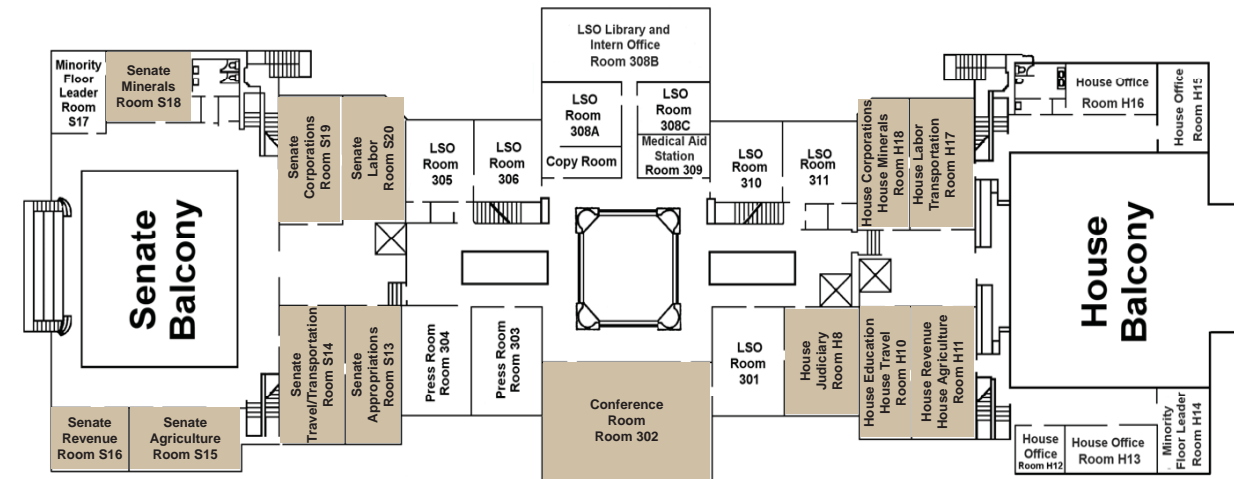
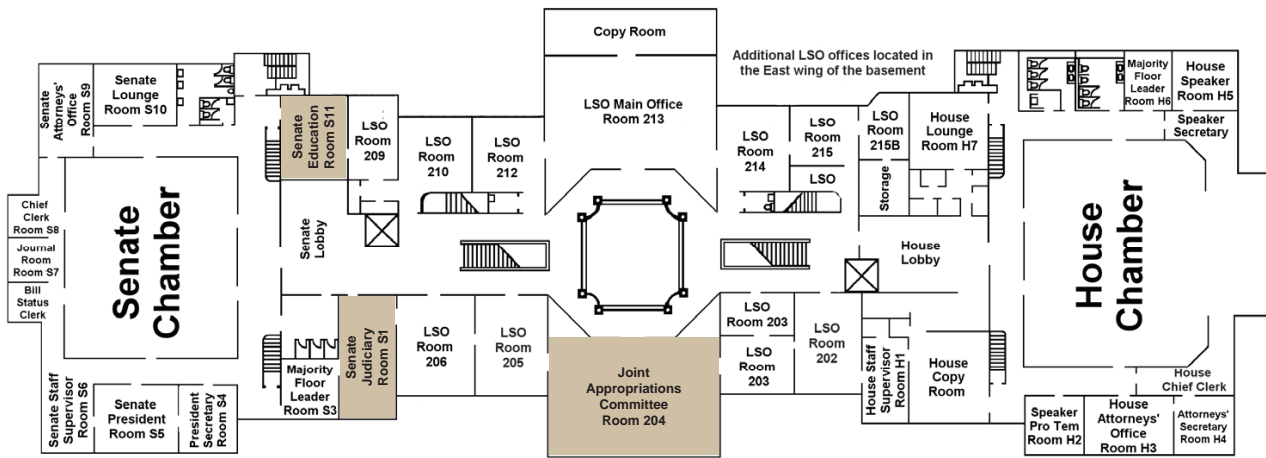
When a bill is up for consideration in committee, the chairman will announce the bill name and number. The sponsor or sponsors of the bill will explain the bill to the committee. Any member of the committee may ask the sponsor questions. Next, other legislators may speak for or against the proposed legislation. Then, the chairman will ask if anyone from the public would like to speak in favor of or against the bill. Once the chairman has decided to end the public comment period, the committee will then "work the bill." This is when the committee members discuss the proposed legislation, consider amendments and decide if the bill should pass out of committee.

How do I make an effective presentation to the committee?

- Wait until the chairman is taking public comment if you want the committee chairman to call on you to speak.
- Be brief and don't repeat what another speaker has said. If your statement is similar to previous comments, you may simply state that you agree with a previous speaker.
- Consider having a handout with a summary of your points. Before you begin, hand out all of the copies to the chairman or committee secretary for distribution.

Second Floor of the Wyoming State Capitol

Third Floor of the Wyoming State Capitol



Occasionally committee meetings are held in Room 302, the basement conference room in the east side of the Capitol, or the Herschler Building, which is directly north of the Capitol and can be accessed by walking across the plaza or through the tunnel located in the basement.

What to know while you are attending a committee meeting

Attending committee meetings to voice your opinion on issues before the Legislature is a great way to participate in the legislative process. Below are a few guidelines to follow when you arrive at a legislative meeting.

When you arrive at a committee meeting

When you arrive at the committee meeting room, please sign the official meeting attendance sheet indicating your attendance at the committee meeting.

If you want to give a handout to the committee

If you would like to provide written information to the committee and you would like your handout to be part of the official committee record, please fill out the Committee Handout Form when you arrive at the meeting room and give the form and a copy of your handout to the committee staff. Please bring enough copies of your information for the committee, the

committee staff, and interested members of the audience. You can also e-mail an electronic copy to: legdocs@wyoleg.gov. Include the committee name, meeting date, document author, document provider and agenda item in the body of the e-mail or include an electronic copy of this form along with your submission. Electronic copies of the form can be downloaded on the Legislature's Website.

If you would like to address the committee

If you wish to address the committee, you will be recognized and called on by the chairman to speak. After the chairman has recognized you, please stand and address the chairman (*i.e.*, "Mr. Chairman"). Then, clearly state your name and the name of the organization you represent prior to addressing the committee. All comments, questions, and responses must flow through the chairman by addressing the chairman each time you wish to speak.

You are always welcome to attend legislative committee meetings to observe or provide testimony on legislation under consideration by committees. The chairman or, in the chairman's absence, the vice or acting chairman preserve the order and decorum of the committee process and have control of the committee rooms. Please review the policies below regarding public attendance at committee meetings.

- Unless you are called upon to testify by the chairman, you should remain quiet and seated at all times. If seating is not available, individuals should stand quietly if space is available.
- No demonstrations are allowed.
- Do not block doorways or egress.
- Do not conduct a verbal conversation on a cellular telephone in the committee room.

- Laptop computers and handheld electronic devices may be used as long as the device's volume is turned off and it is not disruptive.
- If you wish to video record, audio record, or take photographs during the committee meeting you need to advise the chairman in advance of the meeting.
- If you plan to use large video or audio equipment, you will need to obtain advance approval from the committee chairman regarding the location of the equipment.
- The chairman may request you relocate or discontinue the use of your equipment if it becomes disruptive.