



A busy week one of the 62nd Legislative budget session comes to an end with nearly 300 bills filed and a fair number of those surviving introduction. This weekly report will keep you current on legislative action for the week relevant to the bills we are watching. You will find details of committee hearings and amendments in the summary below. Please see WTA's Bill Tracking sheet for general information on all of the bills we are tracking.

GOVERNOR'S STATE-OF-THE-STATE ADDRESS

Governor Matt Mead opened the Joint Budget Session with his fourth State of the State address on February 10, 2014. The Governor announced that Wyoming's economy is strong and well-positioned for this budget session, adding that the state's fiscal stability and economic growth are providing opportunity to its citizens. Governor Mead said, "We are in an enviable position and the time is right to invest in our state, our people, and our future."

Governor Mead highlighted the state's progress over the last three years, including:

- a state energy strategy, which is being implemented.
- consistent support for local governments.
- improved infrastructure - roads, schools, water projects and other facilities.
- major broadband expansion – 700% growth in access for students last year.
- pro-business environment.
- an increase in jobs and a decrease in the unemployment rate.
- the third lowest rate of poverty in the nation.
- government efficiency measures.

Governor Mead's select budget items included:

- investments in infrastructure.
- increased support for local governments.
- additional funding for school and courtroom security
- enhanced services for the elderly and those with developmental disabilities
- improving state facilities - schools, the State Hospital, the Veterans' Home, the Boys' School and the Life Resource Center
- pay raises for teachers, UW, community colleges and other state employees
- funding for medical homes, immunization, and 211 services.

WTA BILLS OF INTEREST THIS WEEK

- The Wyoming Taxpayers Association testified before the House Revenue Committee in support of **HB 22 – Mineral tax-audit interest rate** bill. This bill was amended and passed on second reading.
- The Wyoming Taxpayers Association reviewed the **HB 130 – Cigarette Tax Bill**, which was similar to the bill our organization opposed last year. While there were some slight changes in the bill, they were not significant enough to change the position of WTA. We again opposed this legislation as it does not meet our criteria for good tax policy based on the

WTA Cornerstones of Taxation. Our concerns with HB130 were emailed to the Members of the House of Representatives and can be viewed [here](#). This bill failed on introduction 40-20.