

SUMMARY *of* PROCEEDINGS



JOINT JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEETING INFORMATION

August 12, 2025
Thyra Thomson State Office Building, Round House Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room 3024
444 W Collins Drive
Casper, Wyoming

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Jared Olsen, Co-Chairman
Representative Art Washut, Co-Chairman
Senator Barry Crago
Senator Gary Crum
Senator Larry Hicks
Senator John Kolb
Representative Marlene Brady
Representative Laurie Bratten
Representative Ken Chestek
Representative Lee Filer
Representative Tom Kelly
Representative Jayme Lien
Representative Daniel Singh
Representative Joe Webb

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE OFFICE STAFF

Brian Fuller, Deputy Legal Administrator
Clarissa Nord, Legislative Editor/Session Staff Supervisor
Pierre Chesnais, Research Analyst

OTHERS PRESENT AT MEETING

Please refer to [Appendix 1-02](#) to review the Committee Sign-in Sheet for a list of other individuals who attended the meeting.

The Committee Meeting Summary of Proceedings (meeting minutes) is prepared by the Legislative Service Office (LSO) and is the official record of the proceedings of a legislative committee meeting. This document does not represent a transcript of the meeting; it is a digest of the meeting and provides a record of official actions taken by the Committee. All meeting materials and handouts provided to the Committee by the Legislative Service Office, public officials, lobbyists, and the public are on file at the Legislative Service Office and are part of the official record of the meeting. An index of these materials is provided at the end of this document and these materials are on file at the Legislative Service Office. For more information or to review meeting materials, please contact the Legislative Service Office at (307) 777-7881 or by e-mail at lso@wyoleg.gov. The Summary of Proceedings for each legislative committee meeting can be found on the Wyoming Legislature's website at www.wyoleg.gov.

Page 5-line 3

Delete "[bona fide research](#)" and insert "[data analysis and program evaluation](#)".

MINERAL INTEREST AND OWNERSHIP

Mr. Fuller provided an overview of 26LSO-0076 (0.5), Mineral interest ownership-use and tracing, which would authorize the termination of mineral interest ownership after 20 years of non-use, establish procedures for recording claims, and clarify applicability and exemptions for governmental entities, [Appendix 3-01](#).

Travis Deti, Executive Director, Wyoming Mining Association, provided an update on stakeholder discussions about the bill draft. Mr. Deti indicated that certain industry representatives have expressed concerns and proposed forming a working group to address those issues.

Joe Sylvester, Natural Resources Manager, Wyo-Ben Inc. summarized outreach efforts to title companies and land associations and stated that the bill draft is modeled on North Dakota law but requires further revision to comply with Wyoming statutes.

Public Comment

Public comment was provided by:

- Tracy Good, Natrona County Clerk
- Jim Magagna, Wyoming Stock Growers Association
- Brett Moline, Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation

Committee Action

After discussion, the Chairmen directed that, absent objection, consideration of 26LSO-0076 would continue to the next meeting and formed a working group to collaborate with stakeholders on the bill draft. The Committee appointed Senators Crago, Hicks, and Kolb and Representatives Chestek and Singh to the working group.

RETAIL THEFT ISSUES

Mr. Fuller reviewed 26LSO-0081 (0.4), Theft amendments, which would revise penalties for theft-related offenses, lower the monetary threshold for felony theft, reduce the number of offenses required for felony classification, and establish new provisions for possession and removal of theft detection devices, [Appendix 4-01](#).

Dale Steenberg, President and CEO, Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce, thanked the Committee for considering the bill draft, noted increasing retail theft across the state, raised concerns about repeat offenders, and identified opportunities to enhance law enforcement efforts.

Allen Thompson, Executive Director, Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police (WASCOP), commented on increased theft penalties regarding their potential impact on deterrence. Mr. Thompson emphasized the importance of prosecutorial discretion under the \$500 felony threshold and discussed challenges in addressing organized theft, recommending clearer statutory language.

Public Comment

Public comment was provided by Mike Moser, Wyoming State Liquor Association.

Committee Action

Representative Singh moved that the Committee sponsor 26LSO-0081. The motion to sponsor failed by roll-call vote by a vote of the Senate with Senator Hicks, Senator Kolb, and Chairman Olsen voting no.

Senator Hicks moved that the Committee reconsider 26LSO-0081. The motion to reconsider passed by voice vote. On reconsideration, the motion to sponsor passed by roll-call vote with Representative Brady voting no. The Committee adopted the following amendments on reconsideration:

- Page 1-line 3 Delete line through "theft;".
- Page 1-line 9 Delete "6-3-402(c)(i), (iii)" and insert "6-3-402(c)(iii)".
- Page 2-lines 4 through 10 Delete entirely.
- Page 2-lines 16 and 17 Delete all new language; reinsert stricken language.

Mr. Fuller summarized 26LSO-0082 (0.4), Absconding for criminal purposes-criminal offense, which would create a new criminal offense for traveling across county or state lines after committing a crime, [Appendix 4-02](#).

Public Comment

Public comment was provided by:

- Mr. Steenbergen
- Joey Correnti, Carbon County
- Mr. Thompson

Committee Action

Senator Hicks moved that the Committee sponsor 26LSO-0082. After discussion, the Chairmen directed that, absent objection, consideration of 26LSO-0082 would continue to the next meeting. The Committee adopted the following amendments:

- Page 2-line 1 Delete "Absconds" and insert "Travels".
- Page 2-line 2 After "Wyoming" insert "or from one (1) county in Wyoming to another jurisdiction outside of Wyoming".

WYOMING JUDICIAL BRANCH

Mr. Fuller provided an overview of 26LSO-0077 (0.5), Wyoming supreme court justices-senate confirmation, a Joint Resolution that would amend the Wyoming Constitution to require Senate confirmation of Supreme Court Justices before they assume office, [Appendix 5-01](#). Mr. Fuller also reviewed existing statutes governing Senate confirmation of gubernatorial appointments and noted that statutory amendments would be needed if the Joint Resolution advances, [Appendix 5-02](#).

Public Comment

Public comment was provided by:

- Ross Schriftman, Casper
- The Honorable Michael Davis, Justice, Wyoming Supreme Court (Retired)
- The Honorable Michael Golden, Justice, Wyoming Supreme Court (Retired)
- Emily Madden, Wyoming Trial Lawyers Association
- Mary Elizabeth Galvan, Attorney, Laramie
- Jason Ochs, Attorney, Ochs Law Firm
- Alaina Stedillie, Defense Lawyers Association of Wyoming
- The Honorable Thomas Harrington, Circuit Court Judge (Retired)

- Devon O'Connell, Attorney, Laramie
- Jennifer McDowell, Attorney, Welborn Sullivan Meck & Tooley
- Mr. Correnti

Committee Action

Representative Lien moved that the Committee sponsor 26LSO-0077 (0.5). The motion to sponsor failed by roll-call vote by a vote of the Senate with Senators Crago and Crum, Representatives Chestek and Filer, Chairman Olsen, and Chairman Washut voting no.

WYOMING STATE HOSPITAL

Stefan Johansson, Director, and Franz Fuchs, Deputy Director, Wyoming Department of Health (WDH), reviewed a legislative proposal to authorize the WDH to contract with county jails for the treatment of detainees awaiting Title 7 mental health evaluations, appropriate \$5 million in funding through June 2028, and expand statutory definitions to include county jails as designated treatment facilities, **Appendix 6-01**.

Mr. Thompson discussed the need for a statutory change that would allow sheriffs' offices to recover costs for extended Title 7 holds in county jails. Mr. Thompson expressed WASCOP's support for a tiered compensation structure that increases state reimbursement with length of detention to discourage prolonged jail stays and promote timely transfers to treatment.

Public Comment

Public comment was provided by:

- Chris Walsh, Undersheriff, Converse County Sheriff's Office
- Perry Rockvam, Detention Chief Deputy, Laramie County Sheriff's Office
- Adam Alvarado, Detention Captain, Converse County Sheriff's Office
- John Harlin, Sheriff, Natrona County
- Levi Dominguez, Sheriff, Sheridan County

Committee Action

Chairman Washut moved that LSO draft a bill that would authorize the WDH to contract with county jails for the treatment of detainees awaiting Title 7 mental health evaluations. The motion carried by voice vote.

Senator Hicks moved that LSO draft a letter to the Joint Appropriations Committee requesting \$5 million to support the WDH's proposal and noted that the bill draft would not contain an appropriation. The motion carried by voice vote.

WYOMING ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE UPDATE

Keith Kautz, Wyoming Attorney General, outlined the structure of the Wyoming Attorney General's Office and highlighted the Office's work, including school finance litigation and natural resources. Attorney General Kautz also noted the importance of filling vacancies, supporting budget efforts, and maintaining high-quality legal representation for the state.

Robert Terry, Executive Director, Wyoming Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission, reviewed the Commission's structure, training and certification programs, and provided an update on disciplinary and complaint cases.

Cara Chambers, Director, Wyoming Division of Victim Services, provided an update on federal grant funding, noting several pending and anticipated grant awards, ongoing applications for victim-related programs, and confirmed that operations for the Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation remain stable with no current concerns regarding other funding sources.

Public Comment

No public comment was provided on this topic.

Committee Action

The Committee took no action on this topic.

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS UPDATE

Dan Shannon, Director, Wyoming Department of Corrections, provided an agency update outlining the Department's oversight of correctional institutions, probation and parole offices, and community corrections programs. Director Shannon emphasized ongoing improvements to treatment programs, reentry initiatives, and support services, including enhanced training and resources for veterans. Additionally, Director Shannon reported on facility upgrades and efforts to restore voting and other civil rights.

Public Comment

No public comment was provided on this topic.

Committee Action

The Committee took no action on this topic.

STALKING AND GROOMING LAWS

Mr. Fuller summarized 26LSO-0078 (v0.4), Stalking of minor, which would classify stalking of a minor by an adult, at least three years older than the victim, as a felony offense, [Appendix 10-01](#).

Senator Brian Boner expressed support for the bill draft and noted that it strengthens protections against stalking of vulnerable populations such as children. Senator Boner suggested that the Committee consider expanding the definition of “electronic” to include artificial intelligence, social media, text, email, and electronic account impersonation.

Public Comment

Public comment was provided by:

- Cathy Holman, Glenrock. See [Appendix 10-02](#).
- Michelle Smith. See [Appendix 10-03](#).

Committee Action

Senator Hicks moved that the Committee sponsor 26LSO-0078. The motion to sponsor passed unanimously by roll-call vote. The Committee adopted the following amendments:

Page 2-line 17 Delete "[and is not less than three \(3\)](#)".

Page 2-line 18 Delete "[years older than the minor victim](#)".

Mr. Fuller reviewed 26LSO-0079, Grooming of children-offenses and amendments, which would establish the criminal offense of grooming a minor for sexual conduct, and define grooming and electronic communication, [Appendix 10-04](#).

Public Comment

No public comment was provided on this topic.

Committee Action

Senator Hicks moved that the Committee sponsor 26LSO-0079. After discussion, the Chairmen directed that, absent objection, consideration of 26LSO-0079 would continue to the next meeting.

OBSCENITY LAWS

Pierre Chesnais, Research Analyst, LSO, reviewed a memorandum outlining the digital content applications accessible to Wyoming library cardholders, [Appendix 11-01](#).

Mr. Fuller provided an overview of 26LSO-0080, Sexually explicit materials in libraries-requirements, which would establish statutory requirements for county and school libraries to govern minors' access to sexually explicit materials, create a cause of action for violations, and specify penalties for noncompliance, [Appendix 11-02](#).

Representative Ann Lucas commented on the bill draft and proposed amendments regarding first-offense penalties and clarification of definitions related to minors and young adults.

Public Comment

Public comment was provided by:

- Thea True-Wells, Casper
- Lindsey Travis, President, Wyoming Library Association. See [Appendix 11-03](#).
- Michelle Humber, Director, Sublette County Library, Wyoming Library Association. See [Appendix 11-04](#).
- Conrado Saldivar, Natrona County Library Wyoming Library Association, [Appendix 11-05](#).
- Katie Medill, Sheridan County
- Christopher Mullen, President, Natrona County Library Board
- Mary Schmidt, Casper
- Jenifer Hopkins, Casper
- Reverend Dan Odell, Senior Minister, First United Methodist Church, Casper
- Jenny Sorenson, Gillette
- Mary Owens, Natrona County
- Cristine Braddy, Director, Goshen County Library
- Marylee White
- Audrey Kemp, Uinta County
- Melissa Snider, Wyoming Library Association's School Library Interest Group
- Ann MacKinnon, Casper

Committee Action

The Chairmen directed that, absent objection, consideration of 26LSO-0080 would continue to the next meeting. Chairman Olsen indicated additional public comments on the bill draft would not be accepted during the October meeting.

WYOMING PROBATE CODE

Scott Meier, Attorney, Estate Planning, Elder Law, Trust & Probate Section, Wyoming State Bar, provided an update on a working group of attorneys and stakeholders reviewing potential updates to the Wyoming Probate Code and noted general support for maintaining the current code with targeted improvements rather than adopting the Uniform Probate Code. Mr. Meier indicated that proposed changes would likely take at least two years to develop.

Public Comment

No public comment was provided on this topic.

Committee Action

The Committee took no action on this topic.

FENTANYL AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

Clarissa Nord, Legislative Editor, LSO, provided an overview of a spreadsheet detailing fentanyl offense penalties for all 50 states and discussed several studies on fentanyl arrests and sentencing, including trends in federal enforcement and the impacts of stricter laws on overdose, incarceration, and costs, [Appendix 13-01](#), [Appendix 13-02](#), [Appendix 13-03](#).

Public Comment

No public comment was provided on this topic.

Committee Action

Chairman Washut moved that LSO draft a bill that would remove the statutory age-gap requirement in enhanced penalty provisions for distributing fentanyl to minors. The motion carried by voice vote.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Olsen adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Art Washut, Co-Chairman

Committee Meeting Materials Index

Index Number	Agenda Item	Document Description	Document Provider
1-01		Agenda	Legislative Service Office
1-02		Sign-In Sheet	Legislative Service Office
1-03	Call to Order	Meeting Minutes - May 19-20, 2025	Legislative Service Office
2-01	Wyoming Department of Family Services Confidentiality Statutes	26LSO-0075 v0.5 Department of family services-review and confidentiality.	Legislative Service Office
2-02	Wyoming Department of Family Services Confidentiality Statutes	Department of Family Services Confidentiality Laws - Background Information	Wyoming Department of Family Services
3-01	Mineral Interest and Ownership	26LSO-0076 v0.5 Mineral interests-reversion and transfer for non-use.	Legislative Service Office
4-01	Retail Theft Issues	26LSO-0081 v0.4 Theft amendments.	Legislative Service Office
4-02	Retail Theft Issues	26LSO-0082 v0.5 Absconding for criminal purposes-criminal offense.	Legislative Service Office
5-01	Wyoming Judicial Branch	26LSO-0077 v0.5 Wyoming supreme court justices-senate confirmation.	Legislative Service Office
5-02	Wyoming Judicial Branch	Senate Confirmation Statutes	Legislative Service Office
5-03	Wyoming Judicial Branch	Wyoming Judicial Branch Overview - August 2025	Wyoming Judicial Branch
5-04	Wyoming Judicial Branch	Merit Based Judicial Selection in Wyoming	Wyoming Judicial Branch
5-05	Wyoming Judicial Branch	Senate Confirmation for Justices	Wyoming Judicial Branch
5-06	Wyoming Judicial Branch	Wyoming Judicial Branch Strategic Plan	Wyoming Judicial Branch
6-01	Wyoming State Hospital	Jail-Based Services Bill Draft Proposal	Wyoming Department of Health, Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police

10-01	Stalking and Grooming Laws	26LSO-0078 v0.4 Stalking of minors.	Legislative Service Office
10-02	Stalking and Grooming Laws	The Impacts of Stalking	Michelle
10-03	Stalking and Grooming Laws	Stalking Bill Draft Testimony	Cathy Holman
10-04	Stalking and Grooming Laws	26LSO-0079 v0.4 Grooming of children-offenses and amendments.	Legislative Service Office
11-01	Obscenity Laws	Memo: Information on Applications Providing Access to Digital Content for Library Cardholders	Legislative Service Office
11-02	Obscenity Laws	26LSO-0080 v0.5 Sexually explicit materials in libraries-requirements.	Legislative Service Office
11-03	Obscenity Laws	Wyoming Library Association Suggested Amendments	Lindsey Travis, Wyoming Library Association
11-04	Obscenity Laws	Wyoming Library Statistics	Michelle Humber, Wyoming Library Association
11-05	Obscenity Laws	Library Policies Packet	Conrado Saldivar, Wyoming Library Association
13-01	Fentanyl and Controlled Substances	50-State Comparison of Fentanyl-Related Offenses	Legislative Service Office
13-02	Fentanyl and Controlled Substances	Mortality, Incarceration and Cost Implications of Fentanyl Felonization Laws: a Modeling Study	Legislative Service Office
13-03	Fentanyl and Controlled Substances	U.S. DOJ Report - Heroin, Fentanyl, and Other Opioid Offenses in Federal Courts 2021	Legislative Service Office