

SUMMARY *of* PROCEEDINGS



SELECT COMMITTEE ON TRIBAL RELATIONS

COMMITTEE MEETING INFORMATION

May 22-23, 2025
Frank B. Wise Business Center, Classroom 7
3 Ethete Road
Fort Washakie, Wyoming

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Cale Case, Co-Chairman
Representative Ivan Posey, Co-Chairman
Senator Eric Barlow
Senator Tim Salazar
Representative Joel Guggenmos
Representative Pepper Ottman

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE OFFICE STAFF

Anna Johnson, Staff Attorney
Donna Shippen, Senior Research Analyst
Eve Hamilton, Legislative Editor

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.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Select Committee on Tribal Relations (Select Committee) met for two days in Fort Washakie. On day one, the Select Committee received testimony on tribal developments from the Northern Arapaho Business Council, the Eastern Shoshone Business Council, the Governor's Office and the Tribal Liaisons; updates and information on K-12 education on the Wind River Reservation from the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) and four Fremont County school districts that serve Native American students; updates on promoting higher education for Native American students from the University of Wyoming (UW) and Central Wyoming College (CWC); an update on St. Stephens Indian School from the WDE; an update on Indian Education for All from the WDE; updates and information on 911 service disruption on the Wind River Reservation from the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT), Lumen, the Wyoming Public Service Commission, Wind River Internet and Eastern Shoshone Utilities; information on juvenile justice from the Northern Arapaho Department of Family Services, Eastern Shoshone Department of Family Services, Wyoming Department of Family Services, and the Fremont County Treatment Courts and Youth Services; and an update on healthcare on the Wind River Reservation from Wind River Family and Community Health Care, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming, and Eastern Shoshone Tribal Health.

On the second day, the Select Committee received an update on solid waste and irrigation facilities from Arapaho First and the Eastern Shoshone Solid Waste Department; information on overlap in law enforcement jurisdiction from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Wyoming Highway Patrol; and received an update on missing and murdered persons from the Governor's Office, the FBI, Wyoming Highway Patrol, the Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigations and the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone Business Councils. The next meeting will be held on October 23-24, 2025, with the location to be decided at a later date.

CALL TO ORDER (THURSDAY, MAY 22, 2025)

Co-Chairman Case called the meeting to order at 8:31 AM. The following sections summarize the Committee proceedings by topic. Please refer to [Appendix 1-01](#) to review the Committee Meeting Agenda. The meeting can be viewed on YouTube – Select Committee on Tribal Relations, May 22, 2025 ([AM](#))([PM](#)) and May 23, 2025 ([AM](#)).

TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS AND UPDATES

Chairman Keenan Groesbeck, Northern Arapaho Business Council, provided an overview of tribal developments for the Northern Arapaho Tribe, including economic development and information about illegal dumping on the Wind River Reservation.

Chairman Wayland Large, Eastern Shoshone Business Council, provided an overview of tribal developments for the Eastern Shoshone Tribe, including law enforcement development and information about illegal dumping on the Wind River Reservation.

Chad Auer, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor, introduced himself to the Select Committee and provided an overview of the Governor's Office's work with the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone.

Anita Roman, Tribal Liaison to the Northern Arapaho Tribe, and James Sorrels, Tribal Liaison for the Eastern Shoshone Tribe, Office of the Governor, provided an update on tribal developments, including combating illegal dumping on the Wind River Reservation and current developments in the Governor's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) Task Force.

Co-Chairman Case asked for public comment and no public comment was provided.

K-12 EDUCATION DISCUSSION

Rob Black, Social Studies, Health and PE Consultant and Native American Liaison, and Nathan Tedjeske, Chief Innovation Officer WDE, provided information on Tribal student performance in the State, including graduation rates, ACT scores and average test scores.

Superintendent Elizabeth Smiley, Fremont County School District #14, Superintendent Deb Smith, Fremont County School District #21, and Superintendent Curt Mayer, Fremont County School District #38, presented slides on Native American student performance in their respective districts, including attendance records, graduation rates and test scores (**Appendix 3-01**). They also provided information on how the districts provide cultural enrichment to Native American students, including classes in the Arapaho and Shoshone language, after school programs and celebration of Native American culture.

Superintendent Jodi Ibach and Roy Brown, Cultural, Climate & Native American Education Director, Fremont County School District #25, presented slides on Native American student performance, including attendance records, graduation rates and test scores (**Appendix 3-02**). They also provided information on how the districts provide cultural enrichment to Native American students, including classes in the Arapaho and Shoshone language, after school programs and celebration of Native American culture.

Public Comment

Chesie Lee, Bobbi Shongutsie, Austin Hill and Toni Coulston provided testimony on the school districts on the Wind River Reservation.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Mike Smith, Vice President Governmental Affairs and Community Engagement, UW, Alex Kean, Vice President for Budget and Finance and CFO, UW, and President John Stark, UW Foundation, provided testimony on financial aid options offered to Native American students who attend the university, including information on grants, endowments and scholarships. They also provided an update on tuition vouchers and how the board was exploring ways to implement tuition vouchers for Native American students.

Dr. Brad Tydell, President, CWC, Dr. Coralina Daly, VP Student Affairs, CWC, and Dr. Kathy Wells, VP for Academic Affairs, CWC, provided testimony of financial aid options offered to Native American students who attend the college, including information on grants, endowments and scholarships (**Appendix 4-01**).

Public Comment

Harmony Spoonhunter, Eastern Shoshone Education Director, Chairman Large, Eastern Shoshone Business Council, Vice Chairman Stanford Ware, Eastern Shoshone Business Council, and Chairman Grosbeak, Northern Arapaho Business Council, provided public comment of the challenges that Native American students face when pursuing higher education.

ST. STEPHENS INDIAN SCHOOL GENERAL UPDATE

Mr. Black and Mr. Tedjeske, WDE, provided an overview of the history of St. Stephens Indian School as well as funding updates (**Appendix 5-01**).

Public Comment

Chairman Grosbeak, Northern Arapaho Business Council, provided an update on St. Stephens Indian School, stating that both tribes were working towards taking over management of the school.

INDIAN EDUCATION FOR ALL UPDATE

Mr. Black and Mr. Tedjeske, WDE, provided an overview and update on Indian Education for All social studies standards, stating that UW will be augmenting their teacher education classes with Native American social studies standards ([Appendix 6-01](#)).

Co-Chairman Case called for public comment and no public comment was given.

911 SERVICE DISRUPTIONS ON THE WIND RIVER RESERVATION

Co-Chairman Case provided background information on 911 service disruptions what had occurred on the Wind River Reservation due to a power line being cut at a dig site.

Amy Benning, WYDOT, stated that WYDOT was aware of the situation and would be willing to help in any way possible.

Tim Kunkleman, Public Policy and Government Affairs, Lumen, provided further history on the service disruptions, including information on how they had helped customers connect to other providers or have repaired other customers internet.

Chairman Mike Robinson and John Burbridge, Chief Counsel, Wyoming Public Service Commission, provided further information on the service disruptions, including their communications with Lumen on how to address the issue.

Jan Warren, Executive Director, Wyoming 811, provided testimony on how companies and individuals can call Wyoming 811 to see if there are any underground utilities in their area before they plan on digging. She also provided information on how oil and gas pipelines, irrigation districts, underground utilities and water and sewer systems are registered with Wyoming 811. She stated that her organization was not aware of the service disruptions which had occurred on the Wind River Reservation.

Mike Lawson, Timothy O'Neil, and Patrick Adam Lawson, Wind River Internet, provided an overview and history of their company and how they are currently working to updatar their internet and telecommunications systems for their customers.

Co-Chairman Case called for public comment and no public comment was given.

JUVENILE JUSTICE UPDATE AND DISCUSSION

Jennifer Neely, District Manager/State ICWA Coordinator, Wyoming Department of Family Services (DFS), provided information on how DFS has partnered with the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone Business Councils to work on providing family and juvenile services on the Wind River Reservation.

Lloyd Goggles, Northern Arapaho Department of Family Services (NADFS), provided information on their historic and current case loads and how the NADFS is currently restructuring.

Director Vernalyn Bearing, Eastern Shoshone Department of Family Services (ESDFS), provided information on how the department has been working with Fremont County Juvenile Justice Services to provide quality services to families and juveniles on the Wind River Reservation.

Hattie Calvert and Cassie Murray, Fremont County Juvenile Justice Services, provided information on what services are offered to both Native and non-Native American juveniles in Fremont County. They also provided statistics on citations given to juveniles in the County and the success of the programs ([Appendix 9-01](#) and [Appendix 9-02](#)).

Co-Chairman Case called for public comment and no public comment was given.

HEALTH UPDATE AND REVIEW

Rick Bannon, CEO, Wind River Family and Community Health Care, provided an overview of the health care services offered on the Wind River Reservation, including substance abuse programs and transportation services to larger hospitals.

David Myers, Eastern Shoshone Tribal Health, provided an overview of the health care services offered on the Wind River Reservation, including transportation to larger hospitals, caregiver training and medical workforce training.

Public Comment

Kelsey Prestesater, Government Affairs Principal and Privacy Officer, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming (BCBSWY), Raymond Redd, General Counsel, BCBSWY, Amy Scharaswak, Director of Population Health, Care Diversity & Coordination, BCBSWY and Jill Reinking, Senior Policy and Planning Analyst, Wyoming Department of Insurance, presented information on an insurance fraud scheme which is affecting Native American populations across the country ([Appendix 10-01](#)).

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jerry Prejean, Wind River Job Corp, provided information on recent struggles facing the organization.

RECESS

The Select Committee recessed at 5:36 PM.

CALL TO ORDER (FRIDAY, MAY 23, 2025)

CO-Chairman Posey called the meeting to order at 8:37 AM.

SOLID WASTE AND IRRIGATION FACILITIES

Shawn Brown, Arapaho First, and Chairman Groesbeck, Northern Arapaho Business Council, provided information on illegal dumping which has occurred on the Wind River Reservation. He showed footage of illegal dumping sites throughout the Wind River Reservation and provided information on the cleanup efforts which had taken place over the last year.

Chairman Large, Eastern Shoshone Business Council and Director Verlin Timbana, Eastern Shoshone Solid Waste, provided information on illegal dumping which has occurred on the Wind River Reservation and how they have worked to mitigate the issue.

Co-Chairman Posey called for public comment and no public comment was given.

OVERLAP IN LAW ENFORCEMENT JURISDICTION

Leonard Carollo, Assistant Special Agent, FBI Denver, provided testimony on law enforcement jurisdiction on the Wind River Reservation, stating that the FBI works closely with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and local law enforcement when investigating crime.

Major James Thomas, Field Office Commander, Wyoming Highway Patrol (WHP), provided testimony on law enforcement jurisdiction on the Wind River Reservation. This included information on how the WHP partners with the BIA to obtain cross jurisdictional certification so WHP is able to conduct traffic stops and assist law enforcement on the Wind River Reservation (**Appendix 14-01**).

Co-Chairman Posey called for public comment and no public comment was given.

MISSING AND MURDERED PERSONS UPDATE

Director Cara Chambers, Wyoming Division of Victims Services, Ryan Cox, Wyoming Department of Criminal Investigations, Mr. Carollo, FBI Denver, and Dr. Emily Grant, University of Wyoming, provided an update on the Governor's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) Task Force (**Appendix 15-01 and Appendix 15-03**).

Major Thomas and Bryan Kent, Dispatcher, WHP, provided testimony on how WHP has been aiding with the MMIP Task Force. Mr. Kent provided detailed information on how WHP alerts to public when someone goes missing in the state, and provided background on the different alert systems in the state (**Appendix 15-02**).

Co-Chairman Posey called for public comment and no public comment was given.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Co-Chairman Posey adjourned the meeting at 12:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Senator Cale Case

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
3-01	K-12 Education Discussion	Fremont County School District #14, #21, and #38 Presentation	Fremont County School Districts #14, #21, and #38
3-02	K-12 Education Discussion	Fremont County School District #25 Presentation	Fremont County School District #25
4-01	Higher Education	Central Wyoming College Financial Support to Tribal Students	Central Wyoming College
5-01	St. Stephen's Indian School General Update	History of St. Stephen's Indian School & State Funding	Wyoming Department of Education
6-01	Indian Education for All Update	Efforts to Promote Native American Resources Tied to 2018 Revision to State Social Studies Standard	Wyoming Department of Education
9-01	Juvenile Justice Update and Discussion	Juvenile Justice Services of Fremont County Citations	Fremont County Youth Services
9-02	Juvenile Justice Update and Discussion	Students Served at WYO10 Day Reporting Center	Fremont County Youth Services
10-01	Health Update and Review	WY Blue Cross Blue Shield Fraud Alert Brief	Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming
14-01	Overlap in Law Enforcement Jurisdiction	WHP Law Enforcement Jurisdiction Report	Wyoming Highway Patrol
15-01	Missing and Murdered Persons Update	FBI Missing and Murdered Persons Investigative Review	Federal Bureau of Investigations

15-02	Missing and Murdered Persons Update	WHP Missing and Murdered Persons Update	Wyoming Highway Patrol
15-03	Missing and Murdered Persons Update	Indigenous Victims of Homicide and Missing Persons in Wyoming 2025 Update	Wyoming Division of Victim Services