

SUMMARY *of* PROCEEDINGS



SELECT COMMITTEE ON GAMING

COMMITTEE MEETING INFORMATION

July 30, 2026 | 8:30 AM
Thyra Thomson State Office Building, Round House Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room 3024
444 W Collins Drive
Casper, Wyoming

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator John Kolb, Co-chairman
Representative Jayme Lien, Co-chairman
Senator Barry Crago
Senator Troy McKeown
Representative Steve Johnson
Representative Joe Webb

COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

None

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE OFFICE STAFF

Tamara Rivale, Legislative Counsel
Karen Vaughn, Legislative Editor/Assoc. Fiscal Analyst
Jessie Schaeffer, 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.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Select Committee on Gaming (Select Committee) convened on July 30, 2026, to review Wyoming and multistate gaming revenue information and to consider draft legislation concerning responsible gaming and problem gambling funding, pari-mutuel purses and breakage, charitable raffles, online casinos and sweepstakes games, and the organizational structure of the Wyoming Gaming Commission (WGC or Commission).

The Select Committee adopted a motion to forward 27LSO-0049 to Management Council for sponsorship consideration as amended. The Select Committee amended 27LSO-0096, 27LSO-0054, and 27LSO-0093, instructing staff to incorporate these amendments for discussion at a subsequent meeting, and requested four additional bill drafts: one to provide regulatory authority for online sweepstakes, another to revise the fee on historic horse racing (HHR) wagers, a third to authorize the Wyoming Gaming Commission to place certain skill-based amusement games out of service, and a fourth to revise background check requirements.

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chairman Lien called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. The following sections summarize the Select Committee proceedings by topic. Please refer to [Appendix 1-01](#) to review the Select Committee Meeting Agenda. The Wyoming Legislature makes digital recordings of the meeting available on its YouTube page at: [Wyoming Legislature/Select Committee on Gaming](#).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Select Committee adopted the May 14, 2026 meeting minutes as drafted. See [Appendix 1-03](#).

WYOMING AND OTHER STATES GAMING REVENUES

Jessie Schaeffer, Research Analyst, Legislative Service Office (LSO), reviewed Wyoming's gaming wagering amounts and tax revenue in comparison with selected states exhibiting similar gaming activities, including pari-mutuel wagering, online sports wagering, and skill-based amusement gaming. See [Appendix 2-01](#). The memo identified population size, tax structures, reporting periods, and revenue definitions as factors that could influence cross-state comparisons. The Select Committee discussed out-of-state bettors, problem gambling programs in other states, and gaming tax frameworks, and Ms. Schaeffer responded to related questions.

Co-chairman Kolb requested additional information to establish a correlation between online sports wagering gross adjusted gross receipts and the total wagering handle.

CONSIDER DRAFT LEGISLATION

27LSO-0096 - Responsible gaming and problem gambling prevention funding.

Tamara Rivale, Legislative Counsel, LSO, presented 27LSO-0096 v.0.4, which would create a responsible gaming and problem gambling account administered by the WGC. See [Appendix 3-01](#). The draft would fund prevention, treatment, education, referral, research, and related services through transfers from specified gaming revenues, including online sports wagering, pari-mutuel events, source-market fees, and skill-based amusement games. Ms. Rivale responded to Select Committee questions on lottery funding, appropriations, distributions, administration, and reporting.

Nick Larramendy, Executive Director, WGC, discussed centralizing responsible gaming and problem gambling initiatives and described agency operations. He noted the agency lacks specialized clinical expertise in gambling addiction and that placing the program within a regulatory agency creates tension

with its regulatory role. He also responded to Select Committee questions on agency focus, staffing, and potential overlap with the Department of Health's Behavioral Health and Public Health Divisions.

Angie Van Houten, Public Health Division, Department of Health (WDH) responded to questions from the Select Committee on agency operations and addiction treatment services.

The following individuals provided public comment:

- Lindsay Simineo, Wyoming Behavioral Health Alliance
- Patrick Sweeney, Casper resident
- Ann Clement, Wyoming 2-1-1
- Kyle Ridgeway, 307 Horse Racing and Wyoming Downs
- Brittany Wardle, Cheyenne Regional Medical Center
- Robina Medina, Wyoming Lottery Corporation

The Co-chairman requested the following post-meeting written responses:

- WDH: Whether WDH has a trained gambling addiction specialist or designated gambling addiction treatment contacts;
- Wyoming Behavioral Health Alliance: Number and geographic distribution of mental health, addiction therapy, and addiction-certified providers in Wyoming;
- Wyoming Lottery: Annual unclaimed prize money used for responsible gambling efforts; and
- LSO: Additional sports wagering handle data and current WDH expenditures and population served with online sports wagering funds.

The Select Committee adopted the following amendments by voice vote, in conceptual form:

- Redirect the lottery's responsible gaming funds and a portion of the expired, unclaimed ticket funds to the responsible gaming and problem gambling account created in the bill draft;
- Set the funding threshold for the responsible gaming and problem gambling account to 15 percent of the specified revenue streams;
- Require quarterly distributions to the responsible gaming and problem gambling account; and
- House the program within the Wyoming Department of Health

The Co-chairmen requested that staff incorporate the amendments for the Select Committee's consideration at a future meeting.

27LSO-0054 - *Pari-mutuel events-horse racing purse.*

Ms. Rivale presented 27LSO-0054 v.0.4, which would require pari-mutuel permittees to contribute a minimum percentage of historic and live pari-mutuel wagers to purses for live horse racing at Wyoming tracks. See [Appendix 5-01](#).

Director Larramendy testified on Wyoming's pari-mutuel industry, the relationship between wagering revenues and purse funding, and the effect of purse levels on live horse racing viability. The Select Committee discussed current industry practices and the potential effects of statutory changes with Director Larramendy responding to questions.

The following individuals provided public comment:

- Eugene Joyce, Wyoming Horse Racing
- Pete Ligori, Wyoming Horse Racing
- Affie Ellis, Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck

- Shannon Rushton, Bally Cheyenne Park

The Select Committee discussed and adopted the following amendments by voice vote, in conceptual form:

- Set 0.4 percent of the total amount wagered on historic and live pari-mutuel events as the minimum purse amount for live and historic racing;
- Link the required purse contributions with live event permitting, as discussed by the Wyoming Gaming Commission; and
Include an applicability provision providing that the new purse requirements apply to existing permit holders upon renewal of their permits.

The Co-chairmen requested that staff incorporate the amendments for the Select Committee's consideration at a future meeting.

27LSO-0049 - Pari-mutuel wagering breakage.

Ms. Rivale presented 27LSO-0049 v.0.4, which would define pari-mutuel wagering breakage, require breakage from historic and live pari-mutuel events to be paid to the WGC, and reduce the maximum breakage collected from ten cents to five cents. See [Appendix 5-02](#).

Director Larramendy explained current breakage practices, distinguished breakage from small balances left on gaming machines, and testified that reducing breakage would return more proceeds to players. He noted that vendors and other states are moving toward systems that reduce or eliminate breakage.

The Select Committee adopted the following conceptual amendments by voice vote:

- Reduce maximum breakage from five cents to one cent
- Delay implementation for vendors with existing software contracts until new contracts are signed

Co-chairman Kolb moved the bill draft. Co-chairman Lien clarified that the motion was to forward the bill draft to Management Council for 2027 General Session sponsorship consideration. The Select Committee adopted the motion by unanimous roll-call vote.

27LSO-0093 - Charitable raffles and drawings.

Ms. Rivale presented 27LSO-0093 v.0.3, which would require at least 50 percent of raffle and drawing receipts to be used for charitable purposes and authorize WGC rules on progressive raffle winnings, receipt and proceeds calculations, and documentation of charitable use. See [Appendix 7-01](#). Ms. Rivale responded to questions on rulemaking, current regulation, safeguards, and reporting requirements.

Director Larramendy testified on licensing and rulemaking authority and responded to questions on administrative action versus criminal enforcement.

Mike Moser, Executive Director, Wyoming State Liquor Association, provided public comment.

The Select Committee discussed charitable raffle regulation, progressive raffles, accountability, and whether licensure or rulemaking provided sufficient safeguards without unnecessarily burdening charities. By voice vote, the Select Committee adopted a conceptual amendment to remove raffle and drawing language while retaining the requirement that net proceeds equal at least 50 percent of gross receipts. The Co-chairmen requested that staff incorporate the amendment for future consideration.

The Co-chairmen requested the following post-meeting written materials:

- WGC: Wyoming Supreme Court decision on charitable raffles or bingo games

- LSO: Other states' progressive raffle legal frameworks

27LSO-0098 - Online casinos and sweepstakes prohibited.

Ms. Rivale presented 27LSO-0098 v.0.2, which would clarify that Wyoming's prize promotion statutes do not authorize online casino or sweepstakes games. The draft would classify operating, servicing, offering, or promoting those games as professional gambling. Ms. Rivale explained that the draft addresses virtual currencies, tokens, and similar online gaming value while focusing liability on operators and service providers, not individual players, and includes conforming amendments to existing sweepstakes statutes. See [Appendix 9-01](#).

Ms. Rivale responded to Select Committee questions on drafting conventions, digital currency taxability, definitions, and other states' regulatory approaches.

Director Larramendy testified about enforcement challenges posed by online sweepstakes and casino-style gaming products outside Wyoming's regulated framework, including products using dual-currency systems, sweepstakes models, or similar mechanisms. He responded to questions on distinguishing authorized Wyoming gaming from internet-based products outside Commission licensing authority, regulatory jurisdiction, enforcement, and treatment under current gambling laws.

The following individuals provided public comment:

- Lloyd Melnick, Chief Growth and Strategy Officer, Virtual Gaming Worlds (VGW) See [Appendix 9-02](#).
- Jonathan Downing on behalf of VGW
- Sean Ostrow, Social Gaming Leadership Alliance See [Appendix 9-03](#).
- Bill Gantz, Duane Morris LLP
- Sarah Filosa, Sports Betting Alliance See [Appendix 9-04](#).
- Bryan Schroeder, ARB Interactive LLC

The Select Committee discussed online sweepstakes casino products, the need for additional statutory language for emerging internet-based gaming models, and whether the bill's definitions could inadvertently affect lawful contests, promotions, or sweepstakes. Members also discussed dual-currency systems, virtual tokens, online casino-style products, enforcement authority, and whether operators, service providers, advertisers, payment processors, and technology vendors should be included in professional gambling.

Co-chairman Kolb moved to forward the bill draft to Management Council for 2027 General Session sponsorship consideration, but the motion failed for lack of a second. Members requested additional information before taking final action.

The Select Committee requested that staff present further research and analysis on online sweepstakes gaming, other states' approaches, and the potential effects of the bill's definitions and enforcement provisions at a future meeting.

Co-chairman Lien also requested a bill draft based on [Appendix 9-02](#) to provide regulatory authority for online sweepstakes for future discussion.

WYOMING GAMING COMMISSION STRUCTURE

Ms. Rivale reviewed prior legislation on the Wyoming Gaming Commission's structure and responded to Select Committee questions on membership, qualifications, compensation, staffing, and liaison roles. See [Appendix 10-01](#).

Director Larramendy responded to questions on the Commission's history, the commissioners' regulatory role, and the WGC staff's administration and enforcement duties. He discussed the benefits and challenges of a more professionalized commission model, including added expertise in behavioral health, problem gambling, regulation, investigations, and gaming operations, while emphasizing effective oversight and regulatory consistency.

Sarah DiLorenzo, Deputy Policy Director to Governor Mark Gordon, testified that Wyoming's growing gaming industry has increased demands on the WGC and that strong regulation remains essential. She recommended first strengthening the Commission through additional staffing and specialized expertise before considering a professional commission structure.

The Select Committee requested that the WGC and the Governor's office work on recommendations to improve the current Commission structure and operations.

Affie Ellis provided public comment.

OTHER COMMITTEE DIRECTIVES

The Select Committee directed LSO to prepare the following bill drafts:

- Increase the HHR handle rate from 1.9% to 2.0%
- Authorize the WGC to place noncompliant skill-based amusement games out of service pending a Commission hearing
- Authorize one-time, rather than annual, fingerprinting to reduce Commission costs

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Co-chairman Lien adjourned the meeting at 4:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Co-chairman Lien

Committee Meeting Materials Index

Index Number	Agenda Item	Document Description	Document Provider
1-01		Agenda	Legislative Service Office
1-02	Call to Order	Sign In Sheet	LSO
1-03	Call to Order	Meeting Minutes: May 14	LSO
2-01	Wyoming and Other States Gaming Revenues	Mutlistate Comparison of Gaming Amounts Wagered and Tax Revenue	LSO
3-01	Consider Draft Problem Gambling Prevention and Treatment Funding Legislation	27LSO-0096 v0.4 Responsible gaming and problem gambling prevention funding.	LSO
5-01	Consider Draft Pari-Mutuel Legislation	27LSO-0054 v0.4 Pari-mutuel events-horse racing purse.	LSO
5-02	Consider Draft Pari-Mutuel Legislation	27LSO-0049 v0.4 Pari-mutuel wagering breakage.	LSO
7-01	Consider Draft Charitable Raffles and Drawings Legislation	27LSO-0093 v0.3 Charitable raffles and drawings.	LSO
9-01	Consider Draft Online Casinos and Sweepstakes Legislation	27LSO-0098 v0.2 Online casinos and sweepstakes prohibited.	LSO
9-02	Consider Draft Online Casinos and Sweepstakes Legislation	Proposed Revisions to 40-12-201, et seq.	Virtual Gaming World
9-03	Consider Draft Online Casinos and Sweepstakes Legislation	Draft Online Casinos and Sweepstakes Legislation	Social Gaming Leadership Alliance

9-04	Consider Draft Online Casinos and Sweepstakes Legislation	Regarding 27LSO-0098 – Online Casinos and Sweepstakes Prohibited	Sports Betting Alliance
10-01	Wyoming Gaming Commission Structure	2025 HB0138 Wyoming gaming commission amendments	LSO