

February 17, 2026

**Statement From Chairman Washut to Hold Further
Investigative Proceedings in Abeyance**

Mr. Speaker,

I would like to address the House of Representatives as Chairman of the Select Investigative Committee. Members of the Investigative Committee got together on Friday, February 13 at noon recess to outline a plan for conducting the Committee's work. Committee staff were directed to gather evidence and to develop a structure to contact potential witnesses. The Committee planned to send letters to witnesses inviting them to appear at a hearing early this week.

However, on Saturday, February 14th, the Laramie County Sheriff announced publicly that his Office was launching a criminal investigation into the exact allegations this Committee was tasked with investigating. With that announcement, the Investigative Committee has unanimously decided to pause its investigation pending the outcome of the Laramie County Sheriff's investigation.

Mr. Speaker, all notions of justice and fairness require that the House's investigation be delayed so that those persons under potential criminal investigation may be afforded all the legal protections available to them throughout that investigation. Remember, in a criminal proceeding, all are presumed innocent until proven guilty. The members of the Investigative Committee believe that it is vitally important to protect the principle that every individual is entitled to equal treatment under the law and guaranteed the right to a fair and impartial investigation.

The Joint Rule of the Senate and House of Representative 22-1(k)(vi), which controls investigations of ethical complaints against a legislator states, that if the subcommittee of management council tasked with deciding whether there is probable cause to believe legislative misconduct occurred, "determines that the complaint alleges criminal activity, the subcommittee may recommend that further proceedings under this rule be held in abeyance pending completion of any criminal investigation." While this Investigative Committee was created outside of the Joint Rule process, it is even more imperative in this circumstance when this Committee's public hearings could inadvertently affect the collection of evidence or interfere with the integrity of the criminal investigation.

February 17, 2026

**Statement From Chairman Washut to Hold Further
Investigative Proceedings in Abeyance**

If the criminal matter is not resolved until the conclusion of this legislative session, Management Council can reappoint this Investigative Committee or another committee to review the Laramie County Sheriff's findings, conduct any additional necessary investigations, determine whether any rules of the House or standards of conduct expected of members were violated, and provide recommendations based on those findings.

Mr. Speaker, absent direction to the contrary from this House, the Select Investigative Committee will hold its work in abeyance pending a final determination of any criminal investigation or criminal proceedings in this matter.