



STATE of WYOMING LEGISLATURE

Memorandum

DATE March 16, 2026

TO Members, Management Council

FROM Senator Tim Salazar, Co-Chairman
Representative John Bear, Co-Chairman

SUBJECT 2026 Interim Topics Proposed for the Joint Appropriations Committee

The Joint Appropriations Committee met on March 4, 2026, to discuss proposed interim study topics. This memorandum represents the list of proposed priorities for the Committee for the 2026 interim. If approved, the Committee intends to study these topics in five meetings, excluding the supplemental budget hearings in December 2026, prior to the 2027 General Session.

2026 INTERIM TOPICS

Priority #1 – Wyoming Business Council (20-30 hours)

In collaboration with the Joint Minerals, Business and Economic Development Interim Committee, the Joint Appropriations Committee (Joint Minerals) will conduct an interim study of the Wyoming Business Council (WBC) to evaluate its programs, governance, statutory authority, and alignment with local and regional economic-development partners. The Committee will evaluate the history and original charge of WBC, prior WBC reports, comparative structures used in other states for economic development, and options to clarify the mission and roles. The Committee anticipates that the interim review will develop a strategic direction for the WBC and determine which of its activities should be retained, modified, or eliminated. The Committee will also assess the benefits, distribution methods, and long-term funding sources for a countywide consensus funding program to assist communities with predictable capital planning resources. The intended outcome is to develop a cohesive statewide strategy of economic development and community infrastructure to support development with draft legislation for the 2027 General Session.

Priority #2 – Wyoming Retirement System (12-16 hours)

The Committee will undertake a comprehensive review of the Wyoming Retirement System (WRS), including an actuarial review on the funded status of each plan, historical COLA practices, and sustainable mechanisms for retiree benefit adjustments. The analysis will compare how peer states structure adjustments and consider options such as ad-hoc payments, investment-performance-based dividends, and funded-ratio triggers, with actuarial modeling to protect long-term sustainability. The Committee will receive testimony from stakeholders and retirees. The goal is to consider fiscally responsible statutory guardrails that enable periodic adjustments when the plan's financial health permits, without relying on General Fund dollars. This topic may result in draft legislation for the 2027 General Session.

Priority #3 – State Commission for the Deaf and Blind (4 hours)

The Committee will review current state spending, service delivery effectiveness, and community needs to determine whether revisions to service delivery are reasonably expected to improve coordination and outcomes for blind and deaf persons, including a review of the feasibility and value of establishing a State Commission for the Deaf and Blind. This topic may result in draft legislation for the 2027 General Session.

Priority #4 – Statutory Responsibilities (6 hours)

The Committee will receive and review dozens of reports required by law from state agencies. In particular, the Committee will monitor the allocation and expenditure of authorized Rural Health Transformation Program funding. The Committee will conduct a statutory clean-up focused initially on the distribution of revenues for gaming and liquor and codify budget development provisions historically included in biennial budget bills with the intent to modernize statutory language. In particular, the Committee will receive information at a joint meeting with the Joint Education Interim Committee and provide a recommendation on the K-12 external cost adjustment (ECA) in accordance with W.S. 21-13-309(o), scheduled as a remote, half-day meeting on September 15. The Committee will target interim work products that can be advanced as legislation in the 2027 General Session. This item is scoped for a concise, time-bound review during the interim.

Meeting Schedule and Budget

The Committee requests \$75,000 to accomplish this work and hold the following meetings:

Meeting 1: April 30 – May 1, 2026 (Rawlins)

Meeting 2: June 24 – 25, 2026 (Lander)

Meeting 3: August 28, 2026 (joint meeting with the Joint Minerals, Business and Economic Development Interim Committee in Cheyenne)

Meeting 4: September 15, 2026 (half-day, remote meeting with the Joint Education Interim Committee)

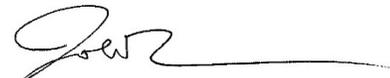
Meeting 5: October 29-30, 2026 (Cheyenne)

Thank you for your consideration of these important issues. We look forward to discussing these proposed topics with the members of Management Council.

Sincerely,



Senator Tim Salazar, Co-chairman



Representative John Bear, Co-chairman