

SUMMER 2026

Wyoming Retired Education Personnel

WREP NEWSLETTER

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What Happened to Any Pay Increase for Wyoming Retirement System Members?

by Jeff Hammer



Wyoming retirees, at least those who paid attention to the legislative session held in February and March of this year, had reason to be hopeful that they would receive a benefit increase, a so-called 13th check, by the end of its last day on March 11, especially after the Wyoming House narrowly approved that part of a larger bill that gave Wyoming state employees a pay raise.

However, the Wyoming Senate, which did approve the pay raises for present state employees, did not approve the benefit increase for retired employees of the state of Wyoming. I decided to ask my representative in the Senate why not.

Cale Case very graciously came to my house on a recent Saturday afternoon armed with the Wyoming constitution and a smile. A fellow 1976 Lander Valley High School graduate, I've known Cale a long time, and I trust his honesty completely.

When I asked why the Senate did not approve of the 13th check, he informed me that his opinion was that doing so would have violated our state's constitution. He then opened a hard copy of that document and read Article 16, Section 6, which states among other things that...

(a) Neither the state nor any county, city, township, town, school district, or any other political subdivision, shall:
(i) Loan or give its credit or make donations to or in aid of any individual, association or corporation, except for necessary support of the poor;

...and as the funds that were to be used for this extra benefit were to have come from the state's General Fund and Wyoming state retirees are a collection of individuals, the payout to us, our state's retirees, would have been unconstitutional.

That does not mean we have no recourse, but the pathway is steep. Legislation to use funds from the Wyoming Retirement System for a benefit increase would have to be proposed in either the House or the Senate and then the legislation would have to be approved by both congressional bodies.

What that means is that each one of us must contact our representative and senator and visit with them about the pressing need for a benefit increase, especially for our members who retired years before our state generously increased teacher salaries to be more competitive with salaries from other states.

Contact information for Wyoming senators and representatives is listed here: www.wyomingpublicmedia.org/find-your-representative-and-senator.

If you are a Wyoming resident, only if you are registered to vote and only if you vote does your voice matter. Otherwise, your voice is meaningless. Only collectively, can our words be strong enough to make a difference.

Our Next Step After the Legislative Session

By Wayne Schatz

We are now in that interim session between legislative sessions. Some legislators are back home planning for their campaign to run for next year's legislature. Others are home reporting to their constituents on the events of last year's legislative session.

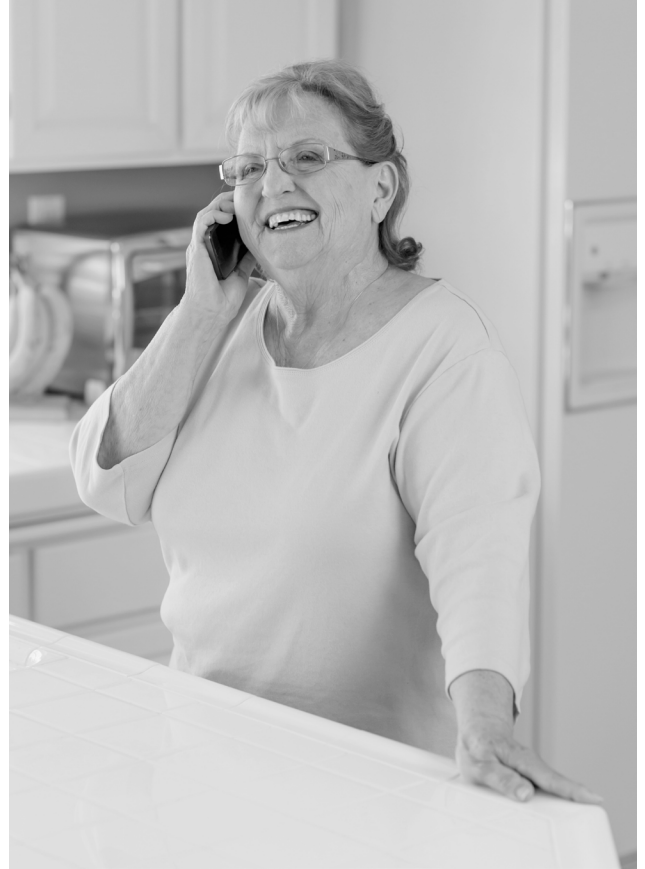
We need to ask ourselves— “How did my legislators do at representing me and my home area?” Have you taken the time to check with them to see how they voted? What do I do now to check their record in this last session?

First, I hope that you will make sure you know the names of those senators and representatives that are from your area. If you don't know who that is, contact your local courthouse office to get the names of those individuals that were from your area and served in this last legislative session. They will have the information on who it was and their contact information.

Secondly, contact your legislators and ask about any public meetings that they have planned. Attend them and ask questions about those issues that you are interested in. You may want to check on their voting record in the last legislative session before you attend the meeting. You can check it at this address—<https://scoring.evidencebasedwyoming.com/rankings>. It will tell you if your representative is conservative or liberal in their voting record. Then you will want to see how they voted on issues that are important to you.

Lastly, visit with those representatives from your area and express your thoughts on issues that matter to you. This is sometimes done at public meetings where others can also express their thoughts about those issues. At other times, it is best to visit “one-on-one” with your representatives about important issues that concern you and your family.

If you feel that you want to take matters to the next level, plan to write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper or plan a gathering of people who feel like you do. This will allow your statement to become a group statement that carries more weight as you share it with legislators.



Of course, you can plan to vote in next Fall's election to make a stronger statement of your views on important topics. It is great to encourage your friends and neighbors to also vote and express their views on important issues. There is always work that you can do after the election to encourage legislators to support those issues that are important to you.

The important thing is this: Stay involved in communicating with your representatives and let them know how their voting in Cheyenne affects you, your family, and your community. We encourage you to stay in the Know about things going on in legislature in Cheyenne.

Summer Safety Tips for Seniors



**Stay
hydrated**



**Use sunscreen
with SPF 30**



**Create a cool
environment**



**Stay indoors
during peak
heat hours**



**Wear
lightweight
clothes**



**Choose
low-impact
activities**



**Store
medication in
cool & dry place**



**Research
before
travelling**

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