



West

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

Wyoming State Visit

CSG West Director, Edgar Ruiz, and accompanying staff visited Cheyenne for their annual visit with Wyoming members and leadership. The visit carried with it more than the traditional agenda as this year's CSG West Annual Meeting is scheduled to convene in Jackson, Wyoming July 28-31. Kicking-off the agenda was a reading of a proclamation signed by every Wyoming legislator celebrating CSG West and the upcoming 73rd Annual Meeting. The proclamation was read by Senate President Drew Perkins with Speaker of the House Steve Harshman and CSG West Chair Senator Mike Von Flatern making additional comments.



Meetings between CSG West staff and legislative leadership provided key insights into the priorities of Wyoming legislators, as well as focused conversation related to the Annual Meeting plans. With the support of Senate President Perkins and House Speaker Harshman, along with legislative members, we look forward to welcoming everyone to a great meeting in Jackson this summer.

Director Ruiz was introduced on the floor of both the House and Senate, with the House introduction being punctuated by testimonials from Western Legislative Academy (WLA) alumni sharing their experiences and outstanding benefits of the WLA with eligible members. CSG West staff also met with Governor Mark Gordon's staff to learn more about the Governor's policy priorities, as well as Legislative Service Office Director Matt Obrecht and staff. While details of the Annual Meeting were a key topic of conversation, discussions also addressed member and staff



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training opportunities. The visit concluded with a large group of WLA alumni and eligible candidates attending the traditional WLA luncheon where staff and alumni were able to answer questions about the program experience and application process.

This year was a short 30-day budget session for the legislature. Reduced coal production, along with lower oil and gas prices are having a significant impact on state revenues resulting in critical challenges for legislators. A key focus was the decline in future revenue projections and how to successfully maintain a balanced budget and delivery of government services, including K-12 education funding. Legislative efforts to address this challenge were aimed at exploring all available options.

Traditionally, the budget session agenda has allotted time almost exclusively for budget discussions with non-budget bills being held until the following year's general session. This year, however, there were over 400 non-budget bills. Additionally, this was the first session to convene in the capitol building after over four years of extensive renovations and improvements. CSG West staff had an opportunity to see many of the improvements during the visit.