



JOHN R. WINTER

House District 28 | Republican

Committees:
2022-House Agriculture, State and Public Lands & Water Resources
Member
2022-House Travel, Recreation, Wildlife & Cultural Resources
Member
2022-Select Federal Natural Resource Management Committee
Member

Please give a brief biography.

John R. Winter, Wyoming House District 28 representing Hot Springs County and portions of Big Horn County, Park County and Fremont County.

Born and raised at Cody and now reside on Kirby Creek near Thermopolis with my wife, Diane, of 26 years. Graduated from the University of Wyoming with a degree in range management and worked for the BLM as a range aide, range tech, range conservationist and wild horse specialist over the course of 14 years. Returned to the private sector in agriculture and as a big game outfitter in the Thorofare area of the Yellowstone between Cody and Jackson Hole. Grew up working in the outfitting business and served as president of the Wyoming Outfitter and Guides Association. Sold my outfitting business, Two Ocean Pass Outfitting, after 38 years in the industry. Served in the 65th and 66th Legislative Sessions of the House of Representatives in 2019-2020 and 2021-2022.

What is the answer to Wyoming's state budget crisis, and how can the legislature help stimulate the economy?

We have to continue to trim and cut costs. Our state agencies are top heavy in management personnel. There are too many levels of government for any business to efficiently navigate while conducting their affairs. I am against any new taxation, especially in a time when everyone is struggling to survive. We as legislators must keep pressure on our governor to get our congressional delegation to push the Congress to reverse course relative to energy production.

What is your solution to meeting the school finance issue in Wyoming, especially when it comes to cuts vs. generating additional revenue?

I believe we need to consider where Wyoming's education is relative to results versus funding levels. Huge amounts of money do not necessarily produce good results.

Consideration should be given to providing practical and vocational skills learning in the K-12 levels of schools as it now is being provided in some of the junior colleges for part-time students and even now in some school districts. I believe that our school districts are willing to make adjustments in their programs, but they also want to maintain local control, and that is a good thing. One of the issues that has been expressed to me is that the districts are willing to make changes but the bureaucratic mandates add to the teachers' workload and takes away from teaching the children. Federal funding for our schools is a big concern of mine. There always seems to be strings attached to this funding. We need to make do with the funding this state can provide.

What is your stance regarding transparency in state and local government, especially in regard to public notices, open meetings and public records?

The public has the right to know what the government is doing, and there are laws on the books that do require public notices and open meetings. However, the protection of personal rights of property owners must be considered.

How can you be an effective voice in Cheyenne to represent the interests of small, rural communities like

those in Big Horn County?

As legislators, we must be in touch with our constituents to know and understand their concerns. There are many interest groups who represent their concerns, and we can help direct them to accomplish their goals. Lobbying can be an effective process in the legislature.

One of the central debates within Wyoming political parties is whether parties should pursue a big-tent approach or require an allegiance to party ideology. What is your approach to the question of ideological purity versus diversity of thought? When do you feel it is appropriate to vote against your party?

I believe in the Republican platform. We are all individuals, and we each have our differences. The Republican platform allows for these opinions. I try to rely on a common sense approach to my votes, and so far it has served me well.

Are there other important issues facing Wyoming and your district that you would like to address?

30x30 land grab (America the Beautiful) by the Biden Administration; overreach of the federal government trampling on our rights; the current administration's war on Wyoming's natural resources. I'm opposed to Medicaid expansion, marijuana and other drug use.