

WP2 Voting Matters...

A perspective on issues impacting Wyoming businesses and their employees.

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Welcome to the Wyoming Prosperity Project...

- a Wyoming Business Alliance Initiative

Through your employer, you are invited to become a part of the Wyoming Prosperity Project (or **WP2**), a grassroots initiative to help build a more prosperous Wyoming. In this initial newsletter, we will discuss the prosperity of Wyoming, what we can do to shape our own destiny and how you can become involved. Over the next several months you will get additional news about public policy decisions and how they are impacting Wyoming's prosperity.

We hope you enjoy this first edition.

Bill Schilling, President

Wyoming's Prosperity - *Important to us all!*

Prosperity is a matter of perspective. Everyone naturally wants to make a "good living" and have a "good" quality of life. Getting there is half the battle and fortunately in Wyoming, we've seen positive economic growth over the past several years. That growth has been good for Wyoming as well as many of its communities, employers and employees too.

Economic growth, either within the doors of an existing business or when new business opportunities emerge, is the key driver of prosperity. To be able to grow a business, you must be able to offer new or different products and services to your customers. Any expansion requires an influx of capital for new equipment, a new building, new employees or new technology, all which come with a price tag. If there was no "investment capital" there would be no economic growth or prosperity.

So where does investment capital come from? Many times a business or individual

will use existing assets to provide for future growth – profits from an earlier business or investment venture. Banks will offer commercial loans for viable business growth and often economic growth is funded through a combination of personal assets and loans. Federal, state and local economic enhancements provide additional sources of capital.

Of course, money alone doesn't mean a business will prosper. In addition to necessary capital and the business know-how to make it all work, a business must be able to operate in a favorable business environment – meaning the appropriate regulatory climate and tax environment that supports growth. A business environment that doesn't allow a reasonable return on investment, stifles business growth.

Even with money and a healthy business environment, one of the most vital components of economic growth is the contribution made by employees working within the

business. Good employees can make an average business great. In Wyoming a skilled workforce is essential to economic prosperity and growth. Training and education for workers is a cornerstone of economic prosperity and to sustain this component, Wyoming's public school system, community colleges and the University must all support workforce training, working with business day in and day out.

When all the components of economic growth come into play – business opportunity, an influx of investment capital, a healthy business environment and well-trained, skilled employees - economic prosperity occurs. Workers have jobs to support their individual prosperity, businesses pay taxes to support the prosperity of the state and local communities, and the sustained growth of business profit helps provide investment capital for future prosperity. Working together—Wyoming prospers.

Principles of the Wyoming Prosperity Project

- **Progressive wealth**, defined as steady improvement in the economy, return on investments, strong commitments to economic expansion, an increase in private-sector jobs, and competitive pay for Wyoming citizens.
- **Efficient and effective government at the state and local levels**—where the delivery of services and the regulation of the private economy are re-evaluated to ensure that government focuses on essential services.
- **Working partnerships between business, government and the citizens of Wyoming** to create a sense of community that preserves traditional values of opportunity, freedom and independence.
- **A balanced commitment to the quality of Wyoming's environment**, recognizing that natural resource development can be balanced with the preservation of quality air, land, water and wildlife resources.

Wyoming Prosperity Project

www.bipac.net/wyoming

WP2 is a non-partisan effort dedicated to research and dissemination of information on matters affecting Wyoming's business and economic climate.

WP2 promotes good government by helping employers and their employees learn about the people and policies that impact their jobs. Tools are available to help shape public policy outcomes.

WP2 hopes to create a more accountable democracy, improved economy and better quality life in Wyoming.

Wyoming Prosperity Project is an initiative of the **Wyoming Business Alliance**

If you have questions, comments or suggestions, please contact us at:

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Key Dates 2008 Election

Advance Registration Closes Primary July 21

Independent Candidates Filing Deadline Aug 5

Primary Election Aug 19

Advance Registration Closes General Oct 6

General Election Nov 4

Voters may register at the polls on the day of the election. To avoid waiting in line, pre-registration is available up to the dates indicated. Contact your local County Clerk for voter registration information.

Election Season is Heating Up - Primary is August 19

With warmer temperatures comes plenty of heated debate about what's best for Wyoming's future.

The filing deadline for the upcoming 2008 election has passed and there are some interesting races to be determined by voters.

All three federal seats are being decided this year. Because Senator John Barrasso filled an unexpired term, his seat must be officially determined by voters. Senator Mike Enzi will sit for regular election and Wyoming's lone seat in the House is up for grabs with the retirement of Representative Barbara Cubin. U.S. Senators serve six-year terms and House members serve two-year terms. All the U.S. seats are contested races.

Sixteen seats are open in the Wyoming State Senate. Half of the Sena-

tors run for election every four years. All sixty House members must run every two years.

You won't see a lot of new faces on the ballot this year. Nearly half of the House and Senate candidates are running unopposed. Eight Republicans and two Democrats have the opportunity for "free rides" in the Wyoming Senate while nineteen Republicans and ten Democrats may get "free rides" in the House.

Some look at the lack of candidates as a concern, others assert that Wyoming voters are pleased with their existing representation and see no compelling need to make changes.

It is very likely that a number of write-in candidates will emerge before the August primary. A write-in candidate with 25 votes during the primary

election can qualify to be listed on the general election ballot.

Even with a limited candidate field, it is important that voters get to know their candidates. Once elected, public officials can have significant influence over Wyoming's prosperity.

Ideas for getting to know your candidates are:

- Search the web for a candidate's web site. Most candidates for U.S. office have an official election website.
- Attend candidate forums in your local community. Check with your newspaper or radio station for upcoming forum dates.
- Call the candidate direct and ask questions about their philosophies.
- Stay tuned to the **WP2 Voting Matters** newsletter for more details.

In Wyoming's 2006 Primary Election, only 29.7% of the voting-age population turned out to vote. That number rose to 48.7% in the General Election.

Did you make your opinions known through the voting process?

Voting - Your Right to be Taken Seriously

Many ask - **Why Vote?**
The better question is -

Why Not Vote?

When you don't vote, you give up your voice in the democratic process. By voting, you get to determine which candidate best matches your personal philosophies and choose who represents you.

Public officials make important decisions about your future - like how much you pay in tax, what kind of business environment exists for economic growth, and how public schools are operated.

When you don't vote, you let others direct public policy.

If you think your vote doesn't matter, think again. Even in Wyoming, there are elections won or lost by a small number of votes.

In 2006, a single House legislative seat was decided by only nine votes. You wonder if more people had turned out at the polls, would the outcome have been different?

Wyoming's U.S. House seat was decided by a margin of 1,012 votes in the 2006 General Election. Considering that 263,083 residents were registered to vote and only 195,217 exercised that right, you wonder if more people had voiced their opinion through voting, would have been different.

If you think you don't have time to vote, think again.

Wyoming makes voting easy.

The first step in preparing to vote is to make sure you are registered. Visit your local Elections office, usually located at the County Courthouse or the City Clerk's office. Bring along a picture ID (a driver's license works best.) Voter registration takes about five minutes.

If you can't get to the Elections office during normal business hours, call and ar-

range to register by mail.

Even if you don't pre-register, you can register at the polls on election day.

Employers are required by law to allow you time off for voting and most polls are open before and after the normal work day.

Once you are registered to vote, assuming you opt for advance registration, you can even vote when it is convenient for you.

Wyoming offers absentee voting. You can go into the Elections office and cast your ballot early or a ballot can be sent to your home.

If you think you might have difficulty getting to the polls on Election Day - perhaps you are frequently called out of town for work duties - absentee voting is an excellent option.

For more information, go to the **WP2** website.

www.bipac.net/wyoming

You must re-register in 2008 if:

- You moved to a different county;
- You did not vote in the 2006 general election.

If you moved within the county to another precinct or changed your name, you must notify the County Clerk.

To vote in Wyoming, you must meet the following qualifications:

- 18 years of age on Election Day;
- US Citizen;
- Resident of Wyoming and the precinct in which you register;
- Withdraw voter registration from any other jurisdiction, if applicable;
- Not be a convicted felon or adjudicated mentally incompetent;
- Present a valid Wyoming driver license if you have one and if not, provide the last four digits of your Social Security Number. (If you have neither, please indicate this on the Voter Registration Application form.)