



Highlights from the 67th Wyoming Legislature State Legislative Effectiveness Scores

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Executive Summary

The Center for Effective Lawmaking (CEL) is pleased to announce the release of the State Legislative Effectiveness Scores (SLES) for the 67th Wyoming Legislature (2023-2024). This report offers highlights from our initial analyses of these scores, including:

- We identify the top 10 most effective legislators in the majority party in both chambers, and the most effective minority-party lawmaker in the House of Representatives and the Senate. Many legislators continued their patterns of highly effective lawmaking from the previous legislative session.
- We identify those lawmakers with the longest streaks of being in our prestigious “Above Expectations” category, as well as first-term lawmakers in this category.
- We find that, consistent with our published research findings, there is an overall lawmaking benefit from being in the majority party. This pattern is clearly on display in Wyoming. Across the 2023–2024 legislative term, majority-party Republicans consistently outperformed minority-party Democrats in State Legislative Effectiveness Scores (SLES) and bill outcomes. These differences highlight the clear institutional advantages of majority-party association in Wyoming.
- Serving as a committee chair is related to greater lawmaking effectiveness in the Senate. This phenomenon is highlighted during the 67th Wyoming legislative sessions where many of the most effective majority-party Senators held committee chair positions.
- In addition, our findings indicate that effective lawmakers in one legislative session are likely to remain effective lawmakers across sessions, as several legislators appear among the lists of most effective lawmakers in both the 2023-2024 and 2021-2022 legislative sessions.

Introduction and Methodology

The State Legislative Effectiveness Scores discussed here are based on the combination of fifteen metrics capturing the bills that each member of each state legislature sponsors, how far their bills move through the lawmaking process, and how substantial their policy proposals are. The scores are normalized to an average value of 1.0 in both the House of Representatives and the State Senate in each legislative session. While the scores capture how successful an individual member of the Wyoming House or Senate is at advancing her sponsored bills, compared to all members of her chamber (in a legislative term), it's important to be cognizant of the fact that the State Legislative Effectiveness Scores do not capture lawmaking activities that occur behind the scenes, such as legislators advocating for the passage of bills that they haven't sponsored. The scores also don't capture how effective individual members of the House or Senate are at blocking the advancement of other legislators' sponsored bills. To the extent that we are interested in identifying who is most successful at advancing their sponsored legislation through the different stages of the lawmaking process (and why), however, the State Legislative Effectiveness Scores provide us with an objective indicator of legislators' efforts. More on our [methodology](#) and [scores](#) can be found on our website.

For each member of the House of Representatives and State Senate, we also identify a Benchmark Score, based on the average lawmaking effectiveness of legislators who share that legislator's majority- or minority-party status, level of seniority, and chair position on a committee. Controlling for these considerations is important in order to describe legislators on a more level playing field. For example, in the 67th Wyoming House of Representatives, minority-party lawmakers had an average SLES of 0.72 compared to 1.02 for majority-party members, while committee chairs had an average SLES of 1.35. In the State Senate, those averages were 0.79 in the minority party, 1.01 in the majority party, and 1.18 among committee chairs.

We then label each lawmaker as "Above Expectations" for those outperforming their benchmark scores by 50% or more, "Below Expectations" for those below 50% of their benchmark, and "Meeting Expectations" for all other legislators.

Finally, within each party, we rank each member according to their SLES. This ranking is used to generate the lists of top performers highlighted in the tables below. Given the substantial lawmaking benefit that follows from being in the majority party, ranking the entire Wyoming Legislature together would be inappropriate, but these comparisons within each party are quite informative.

Highly Effective Republican Lawmakers in the 67th Wyoming House of Representatives

The following table identifies the ten highest-scoring Republicans in the 2023-2024 House of Representatives. Four of the top ten were committee chairs.

Top Ten List—House Republicans (2023-2024 Legislative Sessions)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>SLES</u>	<u>Committee Chair</u>
1.	Lloyd Larsen (District 54)	3.16	None
2.	Barry Crago (District 40)	3.01	None
3.	Dan Zwonitzer (District 43)	2.95	Chair
4.	Steve Harshman (District 37)	2.71	Chair
5.	Landon Brown (District 9)	2.48	Chair
6.	Jeremy Haroldson (District 4)	2.46	None
7.	Rachel Rodriguez-Williams (District 50)	2.33	None
8.	Albert Sommers (District 20)	2.24	Chair
9.	Cyrus Western (District 51)	1.89	None
10.	Tom Walters (District 38)	1.76	None

At the top of the list is Representative Lloyd Larsen from District 54 (Fremont County) with a score of 3.16. In the 2023-2024 legislative sessions, he introduced 12 bills, 9 received action beyond committee, 5 passed the House, and 4 became law.

Rep. Larsen was elected to the House in 2013. In 1983, he co-founded Triple L, Inc., a petroleum supply company, and operated it for 35 years. In 2014, he sold the business and retired. While serving in the House, he has served on and chaired multiple task forces, select committees, and standing committees. Most recently, in 2024, Rep. Larsen chaired the Mental Health and Vulnerable Adult Task Force. In the community, Rep. Larsen has been endorsed by the Petroleum Association of Wyoming, the Wyoming Mining Association, and the Wyoming Public Employees Association.

Three Republican Representatives on our current list were also among the top-10 highest scorers in the 2021-2022 legislative sessions: Rep. Steve Harshman (District 37), Rep. Landon Brown (District 9), and Rep. Albert Sommers (District 20).

Most Effective House Democrat (2023-2024 Legislative Sessions)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>SLES</u>	<u>Seniority</u>
1.	Mike Yin (District 16)	1.94	3

Representative Mike Yin of District 16 (Teton County) was the most effective Democratic lawmaker in the 67th Wyoming House with a State Legislative Effectiveness Score of 1.94. He introduced 11 bills in the 2023-2024 legislative sessions, 5 of which received action beyond committee, and 1 passed the House and became law.

Rep. Yin joined the House in 2019 and has served as the Minority Leader since 2023. When elected, he became the first Chinese-American to serve in the Wyoming Legislature. He holds a degree in computer science from Carnegie Mellon University, and he worked in the software development industry until 2016. Before joining the House, Rep. Yin served as the Vice Chair of the Teton County Democratic Party, and he volunteered on both Bernie Sanders' and Hillary Clinton's presidential campaigns.

Representative Mike Yin was also the highest-scoring Democratic lawmaker in the House in the 2021-2022 legislative sessions.

Highly Effective Republican Lawmakers in the 67th Wyoming State Senate

The following table identifies the ten highest-scoring Republicans in the 2023-2024 State Senate. Four of the top ten were committee chairs.

Top Ten List—Senate Republicans (2023-2024 Legislative Sessions)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>SLES</u>	<u>Committee Chair</u>
1.	Fred Baldwin (District 14)	2.06	Chair
2.	Tara Nethercott (District 4)	1.97	Chair
3.	Ogden Driskill (District 1)	1.88	Chair
4.	Eric Barlow (District 23)	1.86	None
5.	Lynn Hutchings (District 5)	1.63	None
6.	Larry Hicks (District 11)	1.36	None
7.	Stephan Pappas (District 7)	1.30	None
8.	Bill Landen (District 27)	1.26	Chair
9.	Anthony Bouchard (District 6)	1.20	None
10.	Tim Salazar (District 26)	1.18	None

Among Republicans in the Senate, Senator Fred Baldwin of District 14 (Lincoln, Sublette, Sweetwater, and Uinta counties) ranked first with a SLES of 2.06. In the 2023-2024 sessions, he

introduced 8 bills; all of which received action beyond committee, passed the Senate, and became law.

Sen. Baldwin joined the Senate in 2017 and left office in 2025. Before joining the Senate, he represented District 18 in the Wyoming House of Representatives from 2015-2017. Sen. Baldwin graduated from the University of Utah’s School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program, and he has practiced medicine in Wyoming for over 25 years. Today, he is physician assistant-certified (PA-C), and he works in emergency and family medicine at Fossil Butte Medical Group. In the community, Sen. Baldwin has worked as a professional firefighter in urban Wyoming and as a USFS Helitak Firefighter. He currently serves as an officer with the Kemmerer Volunteer Fire Department, and he owns the Victory Theater in Kemmerer.

Four Senators on the list were among the top 10 highest-scoring Republicans in the 2021-2022 legislative sessions: Sen. Tara Nethercott (District 4), Sen. Ogden Driskill (District 1), Sen. Larry Hicks (District 11), and Sen. Bill Landen (District 27).

Most Effective Senate Democrat (2023-2024 Legislative Sessions)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>SLES</u>	<u>Seniority</u>
1.	Chris Rothfuss (District 9)	1.06	7

Senator Chris Rothfuss of District 9 (Albany County) had the highest SLES for Senate Democrats in the 2023-2024 legislative sessions with a score of 1.06. During the 2023-2024 legislative sessions, he introduced 5 bills, 4 of which received action beyond committee, and 3 passed the Senate and became law.

Sen. Rothfuss assumed office in 2011, served as the Minority Leader of the Wyoming Senate from 2013-2025, and now serves as the Senate Minority Whip. Sen. Rothfuss holds a B.A. in international studies and an M.S. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Wyoming, and a Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Washington. He works as an inventor and advanced technology expert. He has over 25 patent applications and 15 granted patents in areas including 3D printing and energy storage, and he has worked as a chemical engineer on enhanced oil recovery projects. In addition, Sen. Rothfuss is an Assistant Professor of Practice for Honors College and an Adjunct Professor of International Studies at the University of Wyoming.

Sen. Rothfuss was also the highest-scoring Democratic Senator during the 2021-2022 legislative sessions.

Lawmakers with Long-Standing Patterns of “Above Expectations”

Those who significantly exceed their benchmark score, which is calculated based on their seniority and status as a majority-party member and/or committee chairperson, are identified as being in our “Above Expectations” category. The lists below identify the Representative with the longest active streaks of exceeding expectations in consecutive sessions continuing through (and including) the 2023-2024 legislative sessions.

State Representative with Longest Streak of “Above Expectations” (through the 2023-2024 Legislative Sessions)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Streak</u>	<u>SLES (2023-2024)</u>	<u>Seniority</u>
1.	Landon Brown (R-9)	3 Legislative Sessions	2.48	4 Legislative Sessions

Representative Landon Brown (R) of District 9 (Laramie County) had the longest streak of "Above Expectations" with 3 legislative sessions and a SLES of 2.48 during the 2023-2024 legislative sessions. During the 2023-2024 legislative sessions, Rep. Brown introduced 9 bills, 6 of which received action beyond committee, and 4 passed the House and became law.

Rep. Brown joined the House in 2017. Before joining the Legislature, Rep. Brown was a member of the City of Cheyenne Planning Commission. He attended Laramie County Community College and the University of Wyoming, and he holds an M.P.A. During his early career, he worked for Verizon Wireless and the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality as a pollution prevention program coordinator and a small-business environmental assistance program coordinator. In 2019, he joined the Cheyenne Regional Medical Center Foundation as the director of annual grants and giving. In the community, Rep. Brown has served on the Board of Directors for Black Dog Animal Rescue and as Treasurer for the Laramie County School District #1.

High-Performing Freshmen

One way to identify future legislative leaders is to identify freshmen Representatives and Senators who earned an “Above Expectations” rating in their first term. Freshman legislators’ initial scores are compared to benchmarks for newcomers—so when a freshman outperforms their cohort, it can reveal strong political acumen, the ability to navigate legislative procedures quickly, and skill in coalition-building or policy entrepreneurship. These traits often correlate with future leadership roles: our research on the U.S. Congress suggests that legislators who perform well early on are more likely to be selected for committee chairs or leadership positions and to influence major legislation in subsequent terms. Hence, identifying high-performing freshmen can offer early signals of who might rise through the ranks.

Freshmen Representatives “Above Expectations” (2023-2024 Legislative Sessions)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>SLES (2023-2024)</u>
1.	Joshua Larson (R-17)	1.29
2.	David Northrup (R-25)	1.29
3.	Jon Conrad (R-19)	1.27
4.	Kenneth Clouston (R-32)	1.19
5.	Dalton Banks (R-26)	1.18

Rep. Joshua “J.T.” Larson of District 17 (Sweetwater County) had the highest SLES and was “Above Expectations” in lawmaking effectiveness during his freshman term, with a SLES of 1.29. During the 2023-2024 legislative sessions, Rep. Larson introduced 6 bills, 3 of which received action beyond committee, and 2 passed the House and became law.

Rep. Larson holds an A.S. in business administration from Western Wyoming Community College, a B.S. in accounting from the University of Wyoming, and an M.B.A. from the University of Wyoming. He works as a Business Development Specialist for Wiley Construction and previously served as a business agent and operations director at the Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce. In April 2026, Rep. Larson announced that he would not be seeking re-election to the Wyoming House of Representatives.

Freshman Senator “Above Expectations” (2023-2024 Legislative Sessions)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>SLES (2023-2024)</u>
1.	Eric Barlow (R-23)	1.86

Republican Senator Eric Barlow of District 23 (Campbell County) had the highest SLES and was “Above Expectations” during his freshman term, with an SLES of 1.86. During the 2023-2024 legislative sessions, Sen. Barlow introduced 8 bills, 7 of which received action beyond committee, passed the Senate, and became law. Sen. Barlow (as noted above) was the fourth highest-scoring Republican Senator during the 2023-2024 legislative sessions.

Before joining the Senate, Sen. Barlow represented the 3rd District in the Wyoming House of Representatives from 2013-2022. While in the House, he served as Majority Leader from 2019-2021 and as the 65th Speaker of the House from 2021-2023. Sen. Barlow is a United States Marine Corps Veteran. After serving in the Marine Corps, he attended Colorado State University

and earned a degree in veterinary medicine. Afterward, he returned home to Gillette, Wyoming, and opened a large-animal veterinary practice. Sen. Barlow is currently running for Governor of Wyoming.

Conclusion

The 67th Wyoming Legislature demonstrated consistent patterns in legislative effectiveness, with experienced legislators, committee chairs, and majority-party members continuing to hold a distinct advantage in advancing their policy agendas. Across both chambers, many of the most effective lawmakers continued their high performance from previous sessions, indicating a durable capacity for lawmaking among key figures. These findings underscore the importance of institutional positions and experiences in shaping legislative outcomes in Wyoming.