

## Governor warns that Wyoming is not 'recession proof'

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Words of warning at the end of last week by Wyoming Gov. Dave Freudenthal. The governor addressed both bodies of the Wyoming State Legislature as he presented his State of the State Address, one day after both the House and Senate officially opened the new session.



He advised that the state has a false sense of immunity from the recession. And even in the state that has strong supply of mineral resources the governor said it will probably get worse before it will get better.

Last summer reports indicated that the state might have an additional one-billion dollars to spend on top of the 8-billion dollar biennium budget that was set last year at this time. Since summer that one-billion dollar surplus has shrunk to an estimated \$259 million. The governor warned, Wyoming enters the recessions late and always leaves late.

Among the governor's proposed cuts this time: The Wildlife Trust Fund and Library Endowment Program.

On education he questioned the amount of spending and the overall grade averages across the state. In fact, Governor Freudenthal stated that in a business sense, the schools as a whole were not performing in accordance with the investments made by state government.

The governor advised the legislature to stay out of people's business. He said there are a series of bills this this time that simply tell people how to run their lives and their business. His advise: use the time wisely and be cautious. He quoted former 1964 presidential candidate Barry Goldwater who said the conservative movement is founded on the simple tenet that people have the right to live life as they please as long as they don't hurt anyone else. The governor said he thought it to be good wisdom then and is good wisdom now.

After the governor's comments, local media pointed out there is a bill that would not recognize gay marriage in Wyoming. Following the governor's comments the bill was funneled into the Senate Education Committee, rather than the Judiciary Committee, where this bill would have traditionally been sent. If the Education Committee chooses to hear the bill, it has little chance of passing in that committee.

And finally the Legislature is trying to decide how to deal with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Decision yesterday to allow Montana and Idaho management of the Gray Wolf, but not Wyoming.