

# Water pipeline bill up for final Senate reading

**By The News-Record staff**

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A bill that would get the Madison pipeline project started is up for a final vote Wednesday after passing a second reading at the state Senate.

Sen. John Hines, R-Gillette, expects the bill to pass because he and Gillette city officials were able to satisfactorily answer questions that the Senate had about the bill.

"I spent all weekend getting my little presentation in order, trying to cover all their questions," Hine said. "Maybe it worked."

City Administrator Mike Muirhead, Mayor Duane Evenson and city engineer Steve Peterson have been driving back and forth from Cheyenne for the past several weeks to promote the bill and answer questions. The bill also has the support of the state Water Development Commission.

The fact that Hines is the Senate's president probably has helped Gillette.

The House might be a different story, though.

"(Rep.) Tom Lubnau thinks it might be tougher to get it through the House," Hines said.

Lubnau did not return calls before press time but has said in previous conversations that some legislators are wary of spending much money on a project for a wealthy county.

The sheer size and cost of the proposed duplicate Madison pipeline has raised eyebrows at the Legislature. The 42-mile project will cost \$226 million before it is completed. The bill requests \$16.8 million " an \$11.2 million grant from the budget reserve account and a \$5.5 million loan from the state Permanent Mineral Trust Fund " to get the project off the ground.