

Commissioner Comments  
Steve Shockley  
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Hello Platte County! I have now been in office for two and a half months, and it has been everything but boring. First of all, I would like to thank all of you for putting your trust in me to serve in this office. It has been a very busy few months and I have learned a lot. Being a county commissioner does not just mean going to the commissioner meetings twice a month, there are many more meetings.

One of the first things that I was able to take part in as a commissioner was the Wyoming County Commissioners Association (WCCA) legislative conference in January. This was a very learning experience. There was a new commissioner orientation that was extremely helpful. We were able to meet with commissioners from all over the state and discuss common concerns. We also went over all the bills that were before the legislature that would have a potential impact on county government. We took a stance on these bills as an association, either in support or opposed, and then we ranked them as to their importance. The ranking determined which bills would be the most important to spend time lobbying for or against. We met with our legislators and had a chance to discuss our concerns. We took a tour of the capital and also met Governor Mead.

With the close of the 61<sup>st</sup> legislature, there are several bills that I would like to highlight. Both Commissioner Millikin and Commissioner Stevenson made a trip to Cheyenne to lobby successfully against HB 67. This bill would have eliminated the circuit court magistrate in Platte County and caused problems for the sheriffs department as well as the county attorney's office. SF 107, titled energy impacted roads program, passed and will have a positive effect when Platte County is seeking funding to deal with the impacts that the energy boom will have on our county roads. SF 26 was a bill that passed that will give the county greater flexibility in determining speed limits on county roads. A supplemental budget amendment was also passed authorizing another 10 million dollars of direct funding above the 35 million allocated for capital construction by the State Lands Investment Board (SLIB) for division between the cities, towns and counties. There was also a considerable amount of time spent on the development of a new wind energy tax policy which was unsuccessful. The revenue committee will look at this issue over the interim.

Two other bills that may not seem important to Platte County at the present time but could help us in the future are SF 9 and SF 143. SF 9 provides for the collection, compiling, analyzing and distribution of county economic data. SF 143 provides for funding of county investigation and litigation related to federal natural resource policy. Both of these bills will give local governments a better position when setting at the table with the federal government in explaining how federal policy will affect local economies. SF 9 was passed through the legislature last year but was vetoed by Governor Freudenthal. Both of these bills passed in this session.

I would encourage everyone to take some time and go down to Cheyenne during a legislative session and visit with your legislators and see the whole process in action.

One other thing that I would like to mention is the board training that the commissioners are sponsoring. This is training for all the appointed county boards and we would also welcome all other boards. This will be held April 21 and should be very informative.

If anyone has comments or concerns, I welcome your input. Feel free to attend a commissioner meeting any time you want as they are always open to the public.