

The start of the new year brings a mix of encouraging and challenging news.

Thanks to your continued support, we are successfully offsetting the loss of federal funding and bridging the gap. However, the Wyoming Legislature's Joint Appropriations Committee has voted to reduce funding to the University of Wyoming, and it specifically singled out Wyoming Public Media for \$1.69 million cut over the next two years.

The transcript from the voting meeting tells why JAC voted to defund WPM. [TRANSCRIPT LINK](#)

Understandably, we're very concerned. This cut affects 8 full-time positions and puts at critical risk our ability to maintain sites in Wyoming, our local news reporting, the Wyoming Sounds channel, and managing FCC compliance including emergency alerts. It cuts out the local heart of public radio – it's service to the public. In short, WPM will not be able to service a state of over 90K square miles with an almost 20% reduction in its budget. Listeners may need to tune to stations in neighboring states if they are within their signal area.

We understand that a faction of our legislature would like to emulate President Trump's defunding of public broadcasting (NPR, PBS) philosophy, but that action has not achieved its goal. NPR and PBS remain strong, while stations and networks like WPM lost their federal funding and are struggling to serve their local population. Now Wyoming is poised to follow in the same footsteps.

This decision marks an early step in the legislative process, not the final outcome. There's time to react.

Lawmakers will continue shaping the state budget during the upcoming budget session, which begins Feb. 9. **Throughout the session, the public has multiple opportunities to weigh in on proposed legislation, budget decisions, and broader priorities.**

One way to participate is by contacting your House representative or Senator directly. You can identify your elected officials using [this mapping resource](#).

Another opportunity is to attend committee hearings and provide public testimony. Public comment is available for every bill introduced in both the House and Senate. For guidance on tracking bills or offering testimony, visit the [Legislature's website](#).

You can add your voice in community conversations, letters to the editor, and comment sections in publications across the state.

We will continue to share updates and next steps on our [GM Update tab](#) and appreciate your ongoing engagement.

Wyoming Public Media Facts:

1. Safety
 - a. We are the Local Primary 1 for the state. In other words, we are the first station that receive and distribute emergency alerts to the state.
2. Signal Reach
 - a. Our radio signal covers over 90,000 square miles and our digital stream can be accessed anywhere remotely.
3. News
 - a. On average, news sources reach over 150,000 pageviews per month on the website alone.
 - b. Collaborations with other Wyoming news stations give voice to corner of the state.
4. Music
 - a. Provides Wyoming Sounds, Classical music, and Jazz to our stations and digitally.
5. Internships
 - a. Wyoming Public Media has an internship training program that involves students, many of them from the University of Wyoming.