

Report to the Citizens of Wyoming

An Accounting of the Past Four Years

*Governor Dave Freudenthal
August 2006*

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Dear Fellow Wyoming Citizens,

I have had the honor and privilege of serving as Wyoming's 31st Governor due to the political support many of you gave me in November 2002.

And because of your counsel and cooperation, together we have begun to create the foundations of a vibrant and stable future for our children and grandchildren.

Nancy and I come away from the past three and a half years with a strong sense of optimism and deep humility. We have been welcomed into your schools, your workplaces, and your homes, shared meals with your families, and learned so much about your hopes and dreams.

When I ran for governor four years ago I made very few promises because I knew that no single individual could meet the needs of Wyoming. What I did pledge was to open up state government and infuse it with a "can do" attitude, to reach out to Wyoming citizens and elected officials – regardless of their political stripes – and work hard to build a consensus about the future of our state.

The response was overwhelming, particularly from state legislators.

Nearly always, lawmakers met our challenge to put the interests of Wyoming above partisan politics. And while there were strong policy differences from time to time, the culture of **"putting Wyoming first"** and the process of reaching out to citizens in every community worked. We are on a course of action that encourages natural resource development on our terms while making a down payment on a series of smart investments for Wyoming's future.



This report to you, the citizens of Wyoming, is an accounting of the last four years. Not every subject is covered, but the report highlights a number of areas where we have made progress. As you know, much remains to be done. I invite your critical review of this report and welcome your comments and ideas.

I'm proud of what we've been able to accomplish – with your help. And with your permission, I'm optimistic and excited about our ability to keep Wyoming moving in the right direction.

Dave Freudenthal
Governor

Wyoming's Course of Action

Governor Dave Freudenthal and state legislators have created a culture of putting Wyoming first, and have worked together to chart a course of action that holds the promise of a vibrant and stable future for our children and grandchildren.

1. Opening up state government and putting Wyoming first
2. Developing our vast energy resources on Wyoming's terms
3. Strengthening Wyoming's economy by building on its energy resources and adding to savings
4. Investing revenues to create a diverse and stable economy
5. Giving our kids the best education anywhere
6. Supporting Wyoming families and people

Opening Up State Government and Putting Wyoming First

The business of “government” is about much more than programs and budgets.

It’s about remembering that – as public servants – we work for the citizens of Wyoming. It’s about encouraging public participation, and then respecting what the public has to say.

Upon taking office, the Governor’s immediate objectives were to set a tone of openness in state government and create a culture of putting Wyoming first.

❖ **Every Wyoming community is important.**

The Governor and First Lady Nancy Freudenthal have criss-crossed Wyoming, continuously meeting with citizens in every county, seeking their input and listening to their ideas and priorities. Governor Dave has averaged more than **38 meetings and events** a month outside of Cheyenne.

❖ **Appointing the best people.**

Putting Wyoming first means selecting the best people to state positions – regardless of their party affiliation. Over **60%** of the Governor’s appointments have been Republican and Independent individuals.

“It’s amazing how much can be done when we don’t worry about who gets the credit.”

Governor Dave Freudenthal

❖ **A partnership with the Legislature.**

Respecting the important role of the Legislature, the Governor met with Republican and Democratic leaders every week during their sessions, seeking bipartisan policies and legislation. As a result, about **80%** of the Governor’s agenda was adopted by the Legislature.

❖ **Seeking broad participation.**

Governor Dave has actively encouraged people from all over the state to participate in the development of state policies and programs. For example, thousands of people participated in creating the **Children and Families Initiative** to strengthen Wyoming’s families.

Developing Our Vast Energy Resources on Wyoming's Terms

Energy development brings great benefits to our country and state.

Yet we cannot allow our Wyoming quality of life to be compromised.

Wyoming has been blessed with vast energy resources in the form of low sulfur coal, oil, natural gas, and uranium. Development of these resources underpins Wyoming's economy and has provided significant economic opportunities that we now enjoy.

Energy development also presents significant challenges ranging from air and water pollution to the disruption of wildlife habitat and the rapid growth of communities.

Governor Freudenthal strongly believes that the problems associated with energy development can be avoided and mitigated. He's taken the lead by meeting with energy officials, community leaders, and others to encourage development and insist that Wyoming's quality of life be protected.

Directional drilling has significantly reduced the impacts of oil and gas production by replacing multiple drilling pads with a single one - capable of drilling in all directions.

Energy Development on Wyoming's Terms

- ❖ **Leasing.** Federal oil, gas, and coal leasing must be based on **adequate** and **timely** environmental reviews. We must oppose poorly analyzed leasing in environmentally sensitive areas such as the **Wyoming Range** while rejecting delays in federal coal leasing in the Powder River Basin.
- ❖ **Protecting water quality.** Energy development – particularly coalbed methane – can result in water problems. That's why the Governor has worked with industry officials and landowners on ways to protect our water and land.
- ❖ **Maintaining air quality.** The Freudenthal administration has developed expertise to monitor air quality and work with the energy industry to see that it is protected.
- ❖ **Wildlife and Cultural Trust Funds.** Governor Dave has worked with the Legislature to support these two important trust funds that will help to maintain Wyoming's unique character as development occurs.
- ❖ **Utilizing advanced technologies.** The Governor and industry officials have aggressively promoted advanced technologies – such as **clean coal technologies** and **directional drilling** - to reduce the impacts of energy development.

Strengthening Wyoming's Economy by Building on its Energy Resources and Adding to Savings

Ensuring a stable economic future requires us to build on Wyoming's natural strength - energy development.

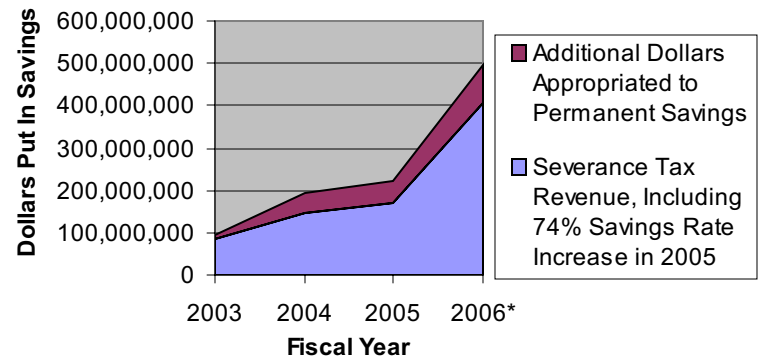
Building on Our Energy Strengths

- ❖ **Sustaining development** over time depends on Wyoming getting full market price for its minerals. Governor Freudenthal activated the Wyoming Pipeline Authority to eliminate barriers that can depress the value of Wyoming's oil and gas.
- ❖ Wyoming is a player in the powerline business due to the creation of the Wyoming Infrastructure Authority. The Governor leads regional efforts to build more power lines, such as the **Frontier Line** to California, and increase electric transmission.
- ❖ Creation of the **School of Energy Resources** at the University of Wyoming, as well as expanded workforce training, will provide Wyoming citizens with exceptional employment opportunities.
- ❖ The University of Wyoming's **Enhanced Oil Recovery Institute** has been expanded to develop technologies that will increase production in existing fields.
- ❖ Support for coal conversion technologies promises to greatly extend the marketability of Wyoming coal.

Boosting Wyoming's Savings for a Rainy Day

- ❖ Governor Freudenthal and legislative leaders increased the funding rate to the **Permanent Mineral Trust Fund** 74%, from 23 cents to 40 cents of every severance tax dollar.
- ❖ This increase will add **\$230 million** to Wyoming's permanent savings in the first year alone.
- ❖ The Governor worked with Legislators to create another more "liquid" fund – the **Legislative Stabilization Revenue Account** – for protection against changes in the price of minerals.

Savings in Permanent Mineral Trust Fund



* Estimate

Investing Revenues to Create a Diverse and Stable Economy

The Governor and legislative leaders worked hard to make smart investments in Wyoming's future.

- ❖ **Water:** Created a \$97 million Water Development Account III to help protect farmers and ranchers from drought.
- ❖ **Education:** Created the **Hathaway Scholarship Program** and increased funding for teachers and school districts.
- ❖ **Job training:** Increased the number of workforce training slots by 556%.
- ❖ **Tourism:** Increased tourism marketing funds from \$11 million to over \$31 million to complement the Governor's re-creation of the Wyoming Tourism Board. Tourism is now a \$2 billion per year industry in Wyoming.
- ❖ **Economic development infrastructure:** Provided \$57 million to 68 projects for 43 local governments under the Business Ready Communities Program. Through the Business Ready Communities Program, nearly 1500 new jobs have been created.
- ❖ **Wildlife:** Enacted a \$44.5 million Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust Fund.
- ❖ **Building communities:** Appropriated \$206 million to assist communities dealing with rapid energy growth. Increased funding for non-energy impacted communities as well.
- ❖ **Broadband communications:** A 400% increase in the number of broadband lines in Wyoming since 2002.

Business Ready Communities - Two Success Stories

The Governor's proposal and push for a "Business Ready Communities" program and the Legislature's funding of it provide practical, effective tools for local economic development efforts. Two examples tell a story of success:

Cheyenne: State funded infrastructure improvements and the Governor's personal involvement helped land the new **Walmart distribution center**. As a result, 450 new jobs were created.

Shoshoni: Business Ready Communities dollars helped existing business BTI create a state-of-the-art paint facility and railroad car refurbishment site, with an associated **increase from 12 to 40 employees**.

Giving Our Kids the Best Education Anywhere

Governor Dave and legislative leaders have made giant steps toward providing our kids the best education anywhere.

- ❖ Created the **Hathaway Scholarship Program** – opening the door to college and trade programs to thousands of Wyoming people.
- ❖ Made historic investments in UW and the community colleges, including matching endowment funds and a new UW School of Energy Resources.



Gov Dave signs into law the legislation creating the Hathaway Scholarship Program while former Governor Stan Hathaway looks on.

Smart Investments in Education

746 School construction or school facility improvement projects since 2003.

30% Decrease in high school drop-out rate between 2000 and 2004.

\$12,422 Per student education funding, ranking Wyoming among the top states in the country.

- ❖ **Improved teacher training and pay** to retain and recruit good teachers.
- ❖ Significantly increased financial support to local school districts to improve the delivery of education at the grassroots level.
- ❖ Encouraged **quality early childcare programs** in Wyoming – making sure every child is ready to learn when they enter the school system.

Supporting Wyoming Families and People

As public servants, everything we do comes down to how well we help people meet their responsibilities as individuals, family members, and citizens.

Despite a strong economy and full employment, we can't lose sight of the fact that some of our citizens face very difficult and challenging situations.

Governor Freudenthal and the Legislature have worked hard to create a good quality of life for all citizens and provide a helping hand to those who need assistance.

- ❖ Attracted doctors and nurses to Wyoming through funding for medical training and repayment of educational loans.
- ❖ Provided substantial new funding to the **Wyoming Senior Services Board** and the 40 senior centers it supports.
- ❖ Increased support for immunizations and foster care to improve the wellbeing of our children.
- ❖ Created Wyoming's first **Military Assistance Trust Fund** to financially help the families of our deployed troops.

- ❖ Since 2002, Wyoming has been expanding the resources committed to our **battle against methamphetamine use**, resulting in a 67% increase in residential treatment, new drug courts, more cops and prosecutors, and tougher laws. The Governor and the Legislature are working with Wyoming's communities to expand local prevention and treatment options and fund local initiatives.

Supporting Wyoming People

\$45 million Annual savings to Wyoming families as a result of the removal of the sales tax on food.

556% Increase in the number of workforce training slots available to workers between 2002 and 2005.

15,000 Households to receive assistance with energy bills and weatherization.

20,000 New jobs created in Wyoming since 2003.

6,000 Children provided health insurance around the state since 2003.

Wyoming is on the right track. Our economy is strong and we have been making smart investments to build a vibrant and stable future for our children and grandchildren.

Relying on a culture of cooperation and "**putting Wyoming first,**" the Governor and the Legislature have worked together to develop our energy resources on Wyoming's terms, diversify our economy, and invest in our people. But as Will Rogers said, "Even if you are on the right track you'll get run over if you just sit there." **We must keep working.**

Investments such as the Hathaway Scholarship Program, the Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust Fund, and a Water Development Account for water storage are but a few of the historic building blocks put in place by the Governor and the Legislature in the last four years. But these foundation blocks are just a beginning - we must continue to invest and we must make sure those investments truly improve the lives of Wyoming people.

With continuing cooperation by the people of Wyoming, the Legislature, and the Governor, much can be accomplished if we stay the course and keep Wyoming moving in the right direction.

Send Your Comments

Help make Wyoming's future even better by sending your comments to the Governor in any of the following ways:

- ◆ send an email to reporttowyoing@govdave.com
- ◆ visit the website at www.reporttowyoing.com
- ◆ write a letter to PO Box 281, Cheyenne, WY 82003

This report is also available online, at
www.reporttowyoing.com

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