

Following a series of recent meetings in Jackson, the Chamber's Executive Committee and I agreed it would be helpful to address our role advocating for local business.



Dear Members,

[Advocacy](#) is an integral and highly valued part of our mission. The Chamber is regularly asked by members to help raise the profile of their issues and concerns.

In our March, 2019 annual member survey, the top concerns from respondents are:

- Community awareness of your business
- Finding qualified employees
- Lack of availability of workforce housing
- Retaining qualified employees

In support of our Chamber Membership, we make public comment—either in written format or at meetings—to support initiatives that align with the needs and values of our business community.

For example, in July 2018 we declined to support the commercial development mitigation rates approved by the Town and County. We suggested an alternative that included incentives and lower mitigation, both of which we felt would result in increased housing, smart commerce, and constructive redevelopment opportunities.

We reiterated our position through public comment at a recent State Legislative Corporations Committee meeting held in Jackson.

At the upcoming State Legislative Corporations Committee in Cheyenne (Nov 18-19), there will be discussion to advance a bill similar to House Bill 277. This bill would remove the ability for municipalities across Wyoming to implement mitigation (or exaction) tools locally. **The Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce would not support such a bill.** Mitigation is a tool that has been successfully deployed in Teton County to create affordable and workforce housing since the mid 90's. It should remain a locally-driven option for creating housing strategies in the future.

While the Chamber disagrees with the current commercial mitigation rates as we witness the penalty approach not producing housing, we believe that any discussion about rates should be a local discussion between residents, stakeholders, staff, and elected officials.

We will be at the table for this discussion with Town, County and other partners and will continue to prioritize this.

Our contract agreements with the Travel and Tourism Board, for visitor services, and in support of our events coordinator and destination sales, are negotiated on an annual basis and are available for public review. We value transparency and include the financial details in our [Annual Report](#).

I invite your engagement and feedback on these topics—and all other topics that enhance the business climate in our community.

Many thanks, Anna

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