

## **WTE Column of Sept. 7, 2014. Editor's Headline: "Pete Gosar is turning heads"**

"Pete Gosar is going to make a terrific governor. He encourages teachers and supports educational institutions. He's empathetic and supportive of women." So says Janet Cunningham, a retired teacher whose daughter teaches in Rawlins.

At a recent rally in Cheyenne, where Mr. Gosar pressed forward his challenge to Governor Mead, Ms. Cunningham pointed out that Mr. Gosar thinks things through yet is quick out of the tracks. "He taught school himself in his hometown of Pinedale," she said. "He knows what he's talking about."

Indeed, Mr. Gosar obtained his degree in secondary education at UW. As member of the State Board of Education, where he has served as treasurer for the past two years, he is committed to fostering the skills and knowledge Wyoming students need to succeed in the twenty-first century.

An experienced pilot and owner of his own aviation business, Mr. Gosar also manages Wyoming's Flight Operations Department. He sometimes pilots Mr. Mead's junkets in and out of the state.

"Governor Mead has done some good things for Wyoming," he said, flashing his endearing smile. "We have attracted businesses like NCAR and Microsoft, which diversifies our economy and contributes to our fiscal health. Regrettably, his blunders far outweigh his positive contributions."

First and foremost, Mr. Mead failed to veto Senate File 104, which, at taxpayer expense, begat the Cindy Hill litigation. Actually, his failure was more significant than signing this hare-brained bill into law: he actively campaigned for removal of voter-elected Superintendent Hill. Why not change the rules from elected position to appointment? Not surprisingly, the courts declared the maneuver illegal.

Next, Governor Mead failed to line-item veto Matt Teeter's infamous budgetary footnote prohibiting implementation of NextGen science standards. The irony of the current limbo: science education has been taken away from the schools while it's part of our university's curriculum; hence, students enter the university underprepared. Education must never become a political football, Mr. Gosar stated, for education is all about opportunity. He feels strongly that education serve today's student needs.

Last but not least: Incredibly damaging to Wyoming's low-wage workers has been Governor Mead's failure to veto Wyoming's legislative decision against federally-funded insurance; in fact, the governor demonstrated his opposition by joining a law suit against the Affordable Care Act—which, of course, didn't go anywhere except eating up tax dollars. The result? Almost 18,000 uninsured have burdened Wyoming's healthcare system with uncompensated care.

"Since January, Wyoming has turned away 74 ½ million on federal dollars that could have secured a healthful existence for Wyoming's uninsured," Mr. Gosar points out.

With the winds of change blowing in Wyoming, suddenly the governor makes noise about rethinking his errors. He now wishes to “explore options” for Medicare expansion, because “Wyoming is missing out” on dollars that other states utilize. For the uninsured, the indecisiveness portends too little too late.

“Healthcare and education provide the most opportunity to any given population,” states Mr. Gosar. “Without them, people cannot achieve their potential.” In a downtown clinic in Laramie, Mr. Gosar volunteers and is on the board of a small but diligent facility where “Two out of three people who walk in should be on Medicaid,” he says.

At state management levels, Mr. Gosar wishes to promote efficiency instead of cutting jobs. In this regard, his management experience has been helpful, he says, which has taught him to identify and cut waste. Laying off employees is a knee-jerk reaction that fails to cut excess spending, he says.

To climate change skeptics like Mr. Mead, Pete Gosar offers this challenge: “Do have the training and expertise to speak on the issue? Where are your credentials?” Science doesn’t operate on beliefs but on proof. The concept of theory must not be used in the colloquial sense but in the scientific sense as having been tested and found to be true. He offers the example of piloting an airplane: Would a non-expert challenge the pilot’s expertise and knowledge? The unfortunate side effect of Mr. Mead’s stance is that people have begun to dismiss expert findings.

Mr. Gosar has seen surprising converts join his camp. Wyomingites are tired of shrill rhetoric; they want measured, intelligent responses, he says. After four years of gubernatorial mediocrity, residents mistrust the governor’s policies and his leadership.

Every Wednesday at 7 PM, Pete Gosar connects with Wyomingites for live chats and real time. At that hour, anyone can raise questions and gain answers via [www.facebook.com/PeteGosarforGovernor](http://www.facebook.com/PeteGosarforGovernor).

Mr. Gosar is confident he’ll unseat Matt Mead in November.