



June 10, 2020

The Honorable Mark Gordon
Governor of Wyoming
State Capitol
200 West 24th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Re: Potential Purchase of Occidental Petroleum lands and minerals

Dear Governor Gordon:

The Equality State Policy Center and our 30 member organizations throughout Wyoming wish to thank you and your staff for your tremendous leadership in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and your dedication to protecting public health, civic engagement, and the civil liberties of the people of Wyoming.

As we write this, peaceful protestors are gathering and marching daily throughout Wyoming's cities and towns in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement calling for community policing reforms and an end to police brutality and police murders of African Americans. Similar protests are happening throughout the nation. We want to thank you for your ongoing leadership and commitment to upholding and defending the constitutional rights of Wyoming citizens to protest and speak out.

And we want to thank you for making improved government transparency in Wyoming a central priority and guiding principle of your administration.

In the spirit of this work, we respectfully submit the following recommendations to help ensure transparency and public involvement in any potential purchase of Occidental Petroleum lands and minerals.

- 1. We ask that you provide the public an open comment period of at least thirty (30) days to review the details of any final proposed bid for purchase.**
 - Allow members of the public to submit written comments electronically and/or via mail.
- 2. We ask that you make the details of any proposed bid for purchase available to the public online no fewer than thirty (30) days prior to the close of the public comment period.**
 - This information would include the total cost, the proposed sources of the funds to make the purchase, the locations of the parcels, the projected costs to

manage the land(s), projected revenue streams from the assets that would be purchased, and any other details that would help the public fully understand the decision to buy these lands and resources.

3. We ask that the State Lands and Investments Board hold at least one informational public presentation and hearing within the geographic area that would be affected.

- At the meeting, the SLIB would present the details of the proposed bid for purchase as well as the rationale for using public money in this way.
- This information can be the same information that is provided online.
- The SLIB would then take public testimony from experts as well as any member of the public who wishes to address the board on this topic.

4. Require an affirmative majority vote in both Houses of the Wyoming State Legislature before proceeding with the proposed purchase.

- Following the public comment period, the Wyoming State Legislature would convene to consider the proposal, either in a special session or regular session.
- If the proposed purchase were to fail to receive a majority vote in both Houses, the purchase would not be made.
- If the proposed purchase did receive the affirmative vote of both Houses, the Governor and/or SLIB would still retain the discretion not to proceed with the purchase for any reason.

Thank you again for your leadership, for your time and consideration of these recommendations, for your dedication to improving government transparency in Wyoming, and for your service on behalf of the citizens of this great state.

Sincerely,



Chris Merrill
Executive Director
Equality State Policy Center