

# "LONE SURVIVOR" PULLS NO PUNCHES

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## Defense chief: "We've got some work to do"

CHUCK HAGEL TALKS NUCLEAR MISSION, MILITARY BUDGET AT F.E. WARREN

By James Chilton  
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CHEYENNE—Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel paid a visit to F.E. Warren Air Force Base on Thursday, delivering a message of gratitude to the men and women serving there for their work in safeguarding America's nuclear deterrent.

Hagel, formerly a two-term Republican senator from neighboring Nebraska, is the first secretary of Defense to visit the base since Caspar Weinberger, who came here in 1982. Hagel said he enjoyed the opportunity to tour F.E. Warren's facilities, including one of its missile alert facilities.

"I grew up in little towns not far from here," Hagel said. "So it was kind of fun to come back and see some of the areas that I am very familiar with."

Having assumed the office of secretary of Defense just last February, Hagel said one reason he chose to visit F.E. Warren was to see its operations for himself. He also wanted to offer encouragement to the personnel



Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel speaks with airmen from the 90th Missile Wing during a stop at F.E. Warren Air Force Base on Thursday in Cheyenne. It was the first time since 1982 that a Defense secretary has visited the nuclear missile base. Blaine McCartney/staff

stationed there, acknowledging that while missile defense is critical, those involved in the work may feel

unappreciated. Hagel addressed officers and airmen after a series of security lapses and disci-

pline problems that were revealed in Associated Press news stories in 2013.

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## Capitol revamp to cost \$259M

By Trevor Brown  
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CHEYENNE—A project to renovate and expand the State Capitol and the adjacent Herschler Building is projected to cost the state more than a quarter of a billion dollars.

The Legislature's Management Council voted Wednesday to draft a bill that would commit lawmakers to spending \$259 million over the next several years on the two-building project.

The decision came after consultants, for the first time, publicly announced cost estimates for the Capitol renovation

as well as the proposed add-on work that would create more state-owned office space in Cheyenne. Consultants recently told lawmakers that about

### Projected costs

- State Capitol renovation: \$113 million
- Herschler Building renovation and expansion, including underground connector to the Capitol: \$86 million
- Soft costs, or non-direct construction spending, for the two projects: \$29.5 million
- Furniture and fixtures: \$8.5 million
- Temporary space: \$2 million
- Contingency fund: \$20 million
- Total: \$259 million

\$113 million would be required for the long-discussed renovation of the Capitol. That work is needed to repair and modernize the historical landmark's electrical, wiring, heating, cooling, fire suppression and smoke filtration systems.

The renovation also would repair damage to the dome and exterior walls, bring the building into compliance with various state and federal codes, and make other changes to restore or maintain its historically significant features.

Lawmakers were told Wednesday that an extra \$86 million would let the state also renovate and enlarge the Herschler Building.

That would include expanding and overhauling the underground connector between the two buildings and constructing a four-story addition to the

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## Liberty Group, resident sue city over sign restrictions

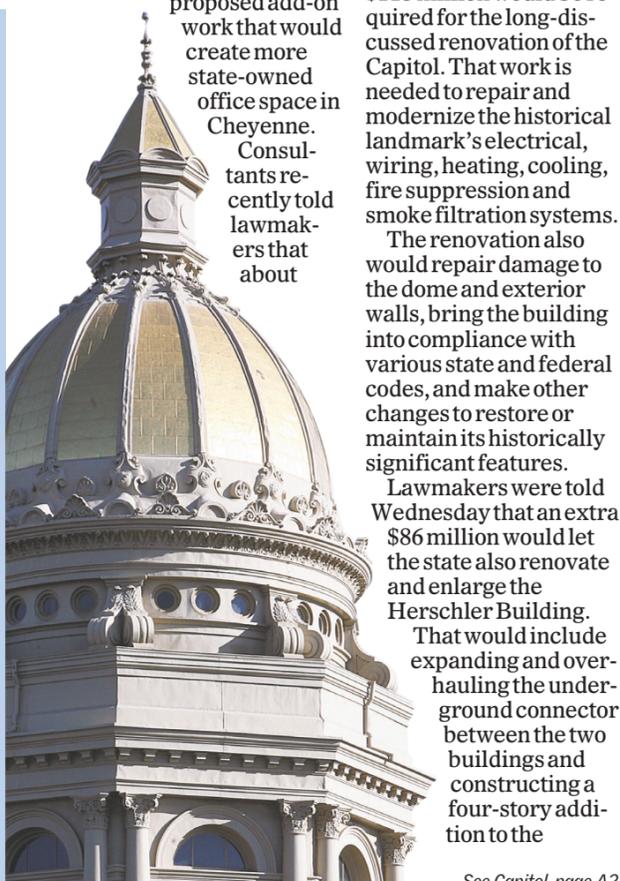
Wyoming Liberty Group attorneys sued the city of Cheyenne on Thursday on behalf of resident Ronald Williams in the United States District Court for the District of Wyoming, according to a news release.

Williams is challenging provisions of the city's Unified Development Code that restrict political signs on private property as an unconstitutional abridgement of free speech.

"The UDC limits Cheyenne residents to two political signs on lots less than one acre, and only allows residents to put these signs up during a certain timeframe," Steve Klein, co-counsel to Williams, said in the release. "This censorship unconstitutionally limits one of the cheapest and most effective forms of political speech available to Cheyenne residents."

Throughout the fall, Wyoming Liberty Group attorney Boyd Wiggam testified repeatedly before the Cheyenne City Council, and worked with some council members and a coalition of concerned citizens on language to amend the UDC to protect free speech. After final reading of this amendment on Dec. 23, it failed to get the votes needed to pass.

Williams, a longtime Cheyenne resident, successfully sued the city in state court in 1995 over similar zoning rules. At the time, the city only allowed displaying political signs from 45 days before an election to 10 days afterward. The court struck down the law, but time restrictions on signs were once again ratified in the UDC in 2012, along with numerical limits.



## Medicaid expansion supporters rally at Wyoming Capitol B5

## Claim filed for girl run over after plane crash

Associated Press

**SAN FRANCISCO** – The parents of a teenage girl who was run over and killed by two emergency vehicles after an Asiana Airlines crash have filed a claim against the city of San Francisco, saying rescuers were reckless and poorly trained.

In legal forms filed this week in San Francisco, attorneys for the parents of 16-year-old Ye Meng Yuan say firefighters who first saw the girl after the July 6 crash should have examined her and moved her somewhere safe.

Firefighters told investigators they assumed the girl was dead and hurried to toward the damaged aircraft.

An autopsy revealed Yuan was alive before the vehicles hit her.

In all, 304 of the 307 people aboard the plane survived after the airliner slammed into a seawall at the end of a

runway during final approach for landing.

The impact ripped off the back of the plane, tossed out three flight attendants and their seats, and scattered pieces of the jet across the runway as it spun and skidded to a stop.

Yuan was one of three Chinese teens who died; one died during the crash, and another later in the hospital.

In their claim, attorneys at the Los Angeles law firm Kreindler and Kreindler representing Yuan's parents name 37 specific airport, fire and police department employees, saying they and others "breached their duty of care." They do not specify damages.

In an obituary, Yuan was described as a champion athlete who excelled at literature, playing piano, singing and public speaking. Her given name means "wish come true" in Chinese.

## Capitol: \$100M set aside already

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Herschler Building's north side.

In addition to the combined nearly \$200 million for the two projects, about \$40 million would be needed to pay for furniture, fixtures and other non-construction costs, such as engineering or architectural work.

The consultants also are recommending a \$20 million contingency fund in case costs go up.

Senate President Tony Ross, R-Cheyenne, who co-chairs the Management Council, said he supports moving ahead with both projects.

He said the Capitol renovation is long overdue. And he said pairing that with the Herschler renovation and expansion makes financial sense.

"To restore (the Capitol), we also need to address the occupancy needs," he said. "And, quite frankly, work is needed on the Herschler Building regardless of what we do."

Tom Whetstone with HDR Architecture said 30,000 square feet of additional space is required for meeting

rooms and offices to meet the needs of the legislative and executive branch staff in the Capitol.

He said that amount will increase by 10,000 square feet after the renovation since more bathroom and electrical closets will replace current usable space.

"The current usage is already rather congested," Whetstone said. "And the building also does not have sufficient systems for safe and proper use."

He said renovating and expanding the Herschler Building would provide enough space to accommodate all the Capitol's needs.

And he said it would create almost 100,000 square feet in surplus space that could be used to house state employees who are now in leased space throughout the city.

Ross said this would go a long way toward reducing the nearly 400,000 square feet of leased office space in the city that costs the state about \$6 million a year.

In addition, Whetstone said, renovating and "right sizing" the Herschler Building could provide enough room for executive and legis-

lative branch staff who will have to move out for more than two years during the Capitol renovation.

Whetstone said the costs could be spread out over five years, so the money would not be spent all at once.

And the Legislature will not have to raid the general fund for the entire \$259 million. That is because lawmakers have set aside about \$100 million in a special account over the past decade to pay for the Capitol renovation and related projects.

The bill that the Management Council voted to draft Wednesday would require the state to pay \$37.5 million for each of the next four years to fund the rest of the costs.

The council, which is made up of high-ranking lawmakers, will meet again within the next 30 days to decide whether to sponsor the bill for the budget session that begins Feb. 10.

If the Legislature approves the funding, the work could begin shortly after this year's session.

One proposed timeline calls it all to be done by late 2017.

Many of the legislators said

Wednesday they support the \$259 million project.

Sen. Eli Bebout, R-Riverton, sits on the Management Council and co-chairs the Joint Appropriations Committee. He said he initially was hesitant to go beyond the basic Capitol renovation.

But he added that he has come around to supporting the Herschler work as well.

"It's not only the fact that the (Herschler Building) is 30 years old," he said. "But we also are going to be able to better utilize space, and from a dollar-and-cents perspective, it's a no-brainer to go forward with it."

Rep. James Byrd, D-Cheyenne, is not a member of the Management Council. But he was on a joint executive and legislative branch task force that recommended earlier in the week that the state move forward with the full project.

He said the work is only intended to meet the needs of the state.

"This entire project, and the cost estimate, really does not include any fluff," he said. "We are not building a monument to ourselves. It is not based on a want; it is based on a need."

## Defense: "Reducing those nuclear weapons ... is important"

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Officials have said the service members are increasingly tired of working in what can seem like oblivion. They win no battles, earn no combat pay and only rarely are given public credit of any kind.

"Sometimes I suspect you feel that no one cares or no one's paying attention to you, but we are," Hagel said. "We are the strongest country on Earth, and we want to continue to be the strongest country on Earth, but it takes

people. It takes leadership. It takes commitment.

"That's something that just doesn't happen," Hagel added. "And what I saw out here today ... just reconfirms – and I will tell the president this as I give him my report on this trip – about that commitment."

F. E. Warren Air Force Base, which is headquarters for the organization in charge of all 450 U.S. intercontinental ballistic missiles, has about 3,100 enlisted airmen and officers and

saw 12 courts-martial in 2013, compared with nine the year before, 12 in 2011 and eight in 2010, according to Air Force statistics provided to the AP last week in response to a Freedom of Information Act request.

In each of the past four years, the courts-martial rate at F. E. Warren was higher than in the Air Force as a whole.

Before his Wyoming stop, Hagel flew by helicopter to a Minuteman 3 missile launch control center in Nebraska. Besides Nebraska, the missiles are in underground silos in Wyoming, Colorado, Montana and North Dakota.

Each launch center, buried 60 feet or deeper underground, controls 10 Minuteman 3 missiles, each in its own silo.

Hagel stressed the need for the U.S. to continue maintaining its nuclear arsenal in a safe, capable and effective manner. He said he remains committed to that focus,

## Nuclear launch officers tied to narcotics probe

Associated Press

**CHEYENNE** – Two officers at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana are being investigated for allegations of drug possession, a service spokesman in Washington, Lt. Col. Brett Ashworth, said Thursday.

Both of those being investigated are ICBM launch officers with responsibility for operating intercontinental ballistic

missiles.

The launch officers' access to classified information has been suspended, and they have been prohibited from serving on missile launch control duty while the Air Force is investigating, another defense official said.

That official provided no further details and spoke only on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to discuss the matter publicly by name.

adding that the nuclear deterrent remains one of the most effective means of preventing war.

"There is no more noble profession in the world than your profession to keep peace in the world," he said.

But Hagel also acknowledged that things haven't been easy of late for the military, pointing to last year's federal government shutdown and the budget strains caused by sequestration cuts.

"We closed our government for 16 days, we lived in a world with no budget, with tremendous uncertainty," he said. "But I'm confident as we go forward the next two years and we establish a budget agreement that will help stabilize us in our commitments and our planning."

Hagel took questions from three of the roughly 130

personnel who attended his speech. One, Tech. Sgt. Laura Paul, asked Hagel what he would take away from his experience at the base.

"How impressed I am with what I've seen," Hagel answered. "The professionalism of each of you, of the units, of how you work together as a team. I think that is first that stands out."

He also added, having seen a missile alert facility firsthand, that the military must continue its focus on modernizing its nuclear deterrent.

"It's clear we've got some work to do on modernization," Hagel said. "And that's why all of us in leadership positions must come out and see things at the ground level."

Another attendee, 1st Lt. Clint Holscher, asked Hagel

what he sees as the future of the U.S. intercontinental ballistic missile force and the nuclear triad (which includes ICBMs, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and traditional bombers).

Hagel said the emergence of new challenges and threats, such as cyber warfare, means that the U.S. will have to analyze all of its military programs to ensure they evolve to meet those threats. The nuclear triad, he said, should be no exception to that, though he also agreed with the need for the U.S. to reduce its number of nuclear missiles.

"We're going to continue to require every element of our nuclear deterrent in the triad," Hagel said. "But reducing those nuclear weapons, I think, is important. Every president since Richard Nixon has supported that, and I think President Obama deserves great credit for leading on this as he has."

Hagel referred to Obama's signing of the "New START" treaty in 2010, along with then-Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. The treaty, which went into effect on Feb. 5, 2011, calls for the number of strategic nuclear missile launchers to be reduced by half, with the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads reduced to 1,550 by 2018.

The final question came from Senior Airman Shelby Ferguson, who asked Hagel whether he saw the Air Force budget stabilizing in the future.

Hagel said that a bipartisan budget agreement reached by Congress last month should provide some predictability for at least two years, though he acknowledged a more long-term agreement will be needed beyond that period.

"Right now, the law of the land, after that two year period, reverts back to the so-called sequestration, which continues to take huge reductions from our defense budget," he said. "The numbers are better than they were because we're getting some money back, but there are still tens of billions of dollars that we didn't get back and won't get back over the next two years."

Hagel said he and the president would continue to push for Congress to provide a more long-term source of stable funding for the military.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

### A Special Thanks to the Guys at Doug's Towing for their work on Tippy Tow.

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## Joe Borghi

Happy Birthday Dad!

Please bring a kind word for our father Joe on his 80th Birthday

We will be at the Cheyenne VA, on Sat., Jan. 11th from 2:30-3:30 in the Community Living Center  
Info. call 307-421-9911

Love Always, Laura, Lisa, Patti & Families

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For further info., contact Jamie Presgrove, Hospice Volunteer Coordinator, at (307) 633-7024.



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