

## IMPORTANT: FORBES REQUEST FOR COMMENT

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To: michael.pearlman@wyo.gov <michael.pearlman@wyo.gov>

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Governor Mark Gordon,

My name is Adam Andrzejewski and I'm a senior policy contributor at *Forbes*. Soon, I'll publish a piece on the Wyoming Retirement System rejecting the open records request for member retirement annuities. Our deadline for comment is today at 5pm EST, May 29, 2020. If you miss our deadline, we'll do our best to update our piece when you respond.

Your response, comment, and on-the-record feedback is very important to our readers at *Forbes*.

Since your election in November 2018, Wyoming has become more transparent in regard to public expenditures. For example, the state checkbook and all public school salaries were recently released.

Now, the Wyoming Retirement System (WRS) rejected an open records request for basic information regarding its member retirement annuities. Wyoming state law supports the release, however, the WRS trustees passed an inter-agency rule barring the release of member information.

See attached for both the request and the rejection letter. **As you can see, your name is across the masthead of the open records denial letter.**

**QUESTION:** What is your position: 1. Does an agency rule trump a state law?; and 2. Can individual governmental bodies, i.e. the Wyoming Retirement System, re-classify public employee names as "private information" in contravention of established state law?

**Background:** Hundreds of local governments across Wyoming such as universities, schools, municipalities have released all public employee information in accordance with state law for years. Why should the Wyoming Retirement System get to shield its records?

Furthermore, even in the union stronghold states of California, Oregon, Illinois, New Jersey and New York, all public employee salary and retirement annuity information is released via open records law. Here's some background on California:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/adamandrzejewski/2020/05/19/why-california-is-in-trouble--340000-public-employees-with-100000-paychecks-cost-taxpayers-45-billion/#169c89b45fb8>

Adam

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