# Wyoming earns a D- for its civil forfeiture laws:

- Somewhat higher bar to forfeit: Prosecutors must provide clear and convincing evidence that property is connected to a crime.
- Poor protections for the innocent: Third-party owners must prove their own innocence to recover seized property.
- Large profit incentive: Up to 100% of forfeiture proceeds go to law enforcement.

#### **Recent Reforms**

- (2018) HB 61: Banned use of roadside waivers to pressure motorists into abandoning seized property.
- (2016) SF 46: Raised standard of proof; imposed new notice requirements; established probable cause hearing following seizure.

#### State and Federal Forfeiture Revenues, 2000–2019

Between 2000 and 2018, Wyoming law enforcement agencies forfeited nearly \$9 million under state law. Between 2000 and 2019, they generated an additional \$2 million from federal equitable sharing, for a total of at least \$11 million in forfeiture revenue. Wyoming ranks 3rd for its participation in the Department of Justice's equitable sharing program. The state does not prevent state and local agencies from using equitable sharing to circumvent state forfeiture law.

At least \$11 million in state and federal forfeiture revenue

2000-2019

	Wyoming Forfeiture Revenues	Dept. of Justice Equitable Sharing Proceeds	Treasury Equitable Sharing Proceeds	Total	<ul> <li>Treasury Equitable Sharing Proceeds</li> <li>Dept. of Justice Equitable Sharing Proceeds</li> <li>Wyoming Forfeiture Revenues</li> </ul>
2000	\$122,385	\$0	\$0	\$122,385	
2001	\$163,313	\$38,604	\$8,000	\$209,917	
2002	\$681,761	\$715	\$228,000	\$910,476	
2003	\$892,274	\$10,881	\$6,000	\$909,155	
2004	\$705,927	\$18,250	\$43,000	\$767,177	
2005	\$391,406	\$119,916	\$0	\$511,322	
2006	\$500,956	\$260,660	\$0	\$761,616	
2007	\$333,790	\$66,348	\$0	\$400,138	
2008	\$383,596	\$113,176	\$0	\$496,772	
2009	\$460,814	\$211,416	\$17,000	\$689,230	
2010	\$242,631	\$211,769	\$270,000	\$724,400	
2011	\$429,004	\$250,286	\$68,000	\$747,290	
2012	\$296,879	\$47,619	\$0	\$344,498	
2013	\$393,048	\$38,653	\$12,000	\$443,701	•
2014	\$301,392	\$28,429	\$10,000	\$339,821	
2015	\$360,852	\$46,657	\$0	\$407,509	
2016	\$902,866	\$150,044	\$48,000	\$1,100,910	
2017	\$1,157,090	\$68,302	\$0	\$1,225,392	
2018	\$147,522	\$36,097	\$194,000	\$377,619	
2019	Unavailable	\$55,612	\$153,000	\$208,612	State Revenues Unavailable
Totals	\$8,867,506	\$1,773,434	\$1,057,000	\$11,697,940	\$0 \$300 \$600 \$900 \$1,200 \$1,500 (in thousands)

# Wyoming's Forfeiture Transparency and Accountability Report Card

Tracking Seized Property	C
Accounting for Forfeiture Fund Spending	A
Statewide Forfeiture Reports	В

Accessibility of Forfeiture Records	D
Penalties for Failure to File a Report	F
Financial Audits of Forfeiture Accounts	F

For full transparency and accountability grades, visit  $\underline{www.ij.org/TransparencyReportCards}.$ 

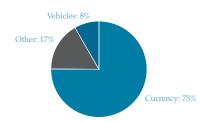
## Forfeitures Under Wyoming Law: Key Facts

#### **Median Value**

\$2,527

From 2015 to 2018, half of Wyoming's currency forfeitures were worth less than \$2,527.

#### **Property Types**



From 2014 to 2018, three-quarters of Wyoming's forfeitures were of currency.

#### Civil vs. Criminal

# **UNKNOWN**

Wyoming does not report whether forfeitures are processed under civil or criminal forfeiture law.

# **Expenditures**

## UNKNOWN

Wyoming expenditure data were not used for this report.

#### **Data Notes**

Property-level seizure data were obtained via public records requests to the Wyoming Attorney General. Figures represent forfeited cash and proceeds from sales of forfeited property and are based on the calendar year in which the forfeiture case was initiated. Equitable sharing data are from DOJ's and Treasury's annual forfeiture reports. Due to differences in reporting and accounting practices, state figures may not match aggregate numbers produced by the state or cover the same 12-month period as the federal data.