

## MINUTES

### MONTANA SENATE 67th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION

#### COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**Call to Order:** Vice Chair Jason D. Small, on February 16, 2021 at 3:00 PM, in Room 317 Capitol

#### ROLL CALL

**Members Present in the Committee Room:**

Sen. Duane Ankney, Chair (R)  
Sen. Jason D. Small, Vice Chair (R)  
Sen. Mike Cuffe (R)  
Sen. Terry Gauthier (R)  
Sen. Douglas (Doug) Kary (R)  
Sen. Ryan Lynch (D)  
Sen. Brad Molnar (R)  
Sen. Keith Regier (R)  
Sen. Mark Sweeney (D)  
Sen. Russel (Russ) Tempel (R)

**Members Present by Zoom Video Conference:**

Sen. Mary McNally, Vice Chair (D)  
Sen. Shane A. Morigeau (D)  
Sen. Christopher Pope (D)

**Members Excused:** None

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Lauren de Paepe, Committee Secretary  
Trevor Graff, Legislative Branch  
Jacquie Simmons, Remote Meeting Coordinator

**Audio Committees:** These minutes are in outline form only. They provide a list of participants and a record of official action taken by the committee. The link to the audio recording of the meeting is available on the Legislative Branch website.

**Committee Business Summary:**

Hearing & Date Posted: SB 183, 2/10/2021; SB 197, 2/10/2021; SB 201, 2/10/2021  
Executive Action: HB 103 - Be Concurred in

**HEARING ON SB 183**

**Opening Statement by Sponsor:**

15:00:24 Sen. Greg Hertz (R), SD 6, opened the hearing on SB183, Revise statute of limitation laws regarding overbilling of telecom services.

**Proponents' Testimony:**

15:01:19 Jay Preston, CEO, Ronan Telephone Company

15:01:39 Sen. Lynch entered the meeting.

15:03:04 Sen. Molnar entered the meeting.

15:03:19 Sen. Morigeau entered the meeting.

15:03:39 Sen. Dan Salomon, SD 47

15:04:17 Geoff Feiss, general manager, Montana Telecommunications Association

**Opponents' Testimony:** None

**Informational Testimony:** None

**Questions from Committee Members and Responses:**

15:05:30 Sen. Kary

15:05:58 Mr. Preston, Ronan Telephone Company

15:07:09 Sen. Cuffe

15:07:29 Mr. Preston

15:08:20 Sen. Molnar

15:08:31 Sen. Ankney entered the meeting.

15:08:59 Mr. Preston

**Closing by Sponsor:**

15:09:33 Sen. Hertz

**HEARING ON SB 197**

**Opening Statement by Sponsor:**

15:10:07 Sen. Janet Ellis (D), SD 41, opened the hearing on SB197, Revise community renewable energy project requirements.

**Proponents' Testimony:**

15:15:57 Robin Arnold, Public Service Commission (PSC)

15:16:43 Andrew Valainis, executive director, Montana Renewable Energy Association (MREA)

15:17:28 Jake Brown, Montana Conservation Voters

15:18:04 Conor Ploeger, Montana Environmental Information Center

Additional Testimony Received:

[EXHIBIT\(ens32a01\)](#)

Opponents' Testimony:

15:19:13 David Hoffman, NorthWestern Energy

Informational Testimony: None

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

15:21:02 Sen. Molnar

15:22:24 Ms. Arnold, PSC

[EXHIBIT\(ens32a02\)](#)

15:22:30 Sen. Regier

15:24:54 Ms. Arnold

15:25:29 Sen. Cuffe

15:26:41 Sen. Ellis

15:27:27 Ms. Arnold

15:27:57 Sen. Cuffe

15:28:11 Sen. Ellis

15:28:45 Ms. Arnold

15:29:37 Sen. Cuffe

15:30:22 Ms. Arnold

15:31:05 Sen. Pope

15:31:47 Sen. Lynch left the meeting.

15:32:02 Mr. Valainis, MREA

Closing by Sponsor:

15:34:19 Sen. Ellis

**HEARING ON SB 201**

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

15:34:58 Sen. Steve Fitzpatrick (R), SD 10, opened the hearing on SB201, Revise avoided cost rate-making.

Proponents' Testimony:

15:37:28 Robin Arnold, Public Service Commission (PSC)

15:38:18 David Hoffman, NorthWestern Energy

15:39:44 Dwight Rose, IBEW Local 44

15:40:16 Bridger Mahlum, Montana Chamber of Commerce

15:40:51 Adam Haight, Montana American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

15:41:23 Jason Brown, Montana Consumer Counsel (MCC)

Opponents' Testimony:

15:42:22 Ben Singer, Hydrodynamics Inc.; Granite County

[EXHIBIT\(ens32a03\)](#)

15:44:31 Anne Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center (MEIC)

Additional Testimony Received:

[EXHIBIT\(ens32a04\)](#)

Informational Testimony: None

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

15:50:35 Sen. McNally  
 15:54:40 Ms. Arnold, PSC  
 15:55:03 Sen. Morigeau  
 15:57:05 Ms. Hedges, MEIC  
 15:57:28 Sen. Pope  
 15:58:55 Ms. Arnold  
 15:59:56 Sen. Pope  
 16:01:06 Mr. Brown, MCC

Closing by Sponsor:

16:03:39 Sen. Fitzpatrick  
 16:04:17 Chair Small gave the duties of the chair to Sen. Ankney.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 103**

16:05:05 **Motion:** Sen. Small moved that **HB 103 BE CONCURRED IN.**

Discussion:

16:05:23 Sen. Small  
 16:05:39 Sen. McNally  
 16:05:49 **Vote:** Motion carried 12-0 by voice vote. Sen. Lynch was excused. Sen. Small will carry the bill.

Committee Business:

16:06:04 Chair Ankney  
 16:06:50 Trevor Graff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
 16:07:09 Chair Ankney  
 16:07:15 Sen. McNally  
 16:07:38 Chair Ankney  
 16:08:23 Mr. Graff, LSD  
 16:08:49 Chair Ankney

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment: 4:09 PM

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Lauren de Paepe, Secretary

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Additional Documents:

**EXHIBIT**([ens32aad.pdf](#))