

**MINUTES**  
**MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**68th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**  
**COMMITTEE ON (H) APPROPRIATIONS**

**Call to Order:** Chair Rep. Llew Jones-R, on February 27, 2023 at 9:10 AM, in Room 102

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:** Rep. Llew Jones, Chair (R)  
Rep. Bob Keenan, Vice Chair (R)  
Rep. David Bedey (R)  
Rep. Michele Binkley (R)  
Rep. Terry Falk (R)  
Rep. Jane Gillette (R)  
Rep. Jim Hamilton (D)  
Rep. Naarah Hastings (R)  
Rep. Mike Hopkins (R)  
Rep. Connie Keogh (D)  
Rep. Emma Kerr-Carpenter (D)  
Rep. Bill Mercer (R)  
Rep. Terry Moore (R)  
Rep. Joe Read (R)  
Rep. Jerry Schillinger (R)  
Rep. Sharon Stewart Peregoy (D)  
Rep. Paul Tuss (D)

**Members Excused:** Rep. Mary Caferro (D)  
Rep. John Fitzpatrick (R)  
Rep. Lyn Hellegaard (R)  
Rep. Fiona Nave (R)  
Rep. Matt Regier (R)  
Rep. Jonathan Windy Boy (D)

**Staff Present:** Quinn Holzer, Fiscal Analyst  
Julie Johnson, Research Analyst  
Kathlyn Walker, Secretary

**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:

HB 396 02/24/2023  
HB 426 02/24/2023

Executive Action:

HB 396 DO PASS  
HB 426 DO PASS  
SB 124 BE CONCURRED IN  
SB 121 BE CONCURRED IN

10:06:39

Rep. Windy Boy joined the meeting.

**HEARING ON HB 426 - Revising laws relating to inmates approaching parole eligibility or discharge**

**Opening Statement:**

09:12:21 Rep. Michael Yakawich (R), HD 51, opened the hearing on HB 426, Revising laws relating to inmates approaching parole eligibility or discharge.

**Proponent Testimony:**

09:13:44 Erin McGowan, Montana Community Corrections Association (MCCA)

**Opponent Testimony:**

None

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

09:15:39 Natalie Smitham, Chief Financial Officer, Department of Corrections (DOC)

**Questions from Committee:**

09:16:09 Rep. Bill Mercer  
09:16:29 Natalie Smitham, DOC  
09:17:38 Rep. Jane Gillette  
09:18:00 Natalie Smitham, DOC  
09:19:56 Rep. Jim Hamilton  
09:20:23 Natalie Smitham, DOC  
09:22:11 Rep. Bill Mercer  
09:22:34 Natalie Smitham, DOC  
09:25:00 Rep. Emma Kerr-Carpenter

09:25:24 Erin McGowan, MCCA

**Closing Statement:**

09:26:18 Rep. Michael Yakawich (R), HD 51, closed the hearing on HB 426.

**HEARING ON HB 396 - Require school trustees to admit resident children on a part-time basis**

**Opening Statement:**

09:27:45 Rep. Naarah Hastings (R), HD 50, opened the hearing on HB 396, Require school trustees to admit resident children on a part-time basis.

**Proponent Testimony:**

09:28:42 Dylan Klapmeier, Governor's Education Advisor

09:29:48 Lance Melton, Montana School Boards Association, Coalition of Advocates for Montana Public Schools (CAMPS)

**Opponent Testimony:**

None

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

09:32:17 Paul Taylor, Office of Public Instruction (OPI)

**Questions from Committee:**

09:14:51 Rep. Read left the meeting.

09:32:39 Rep. Jim Hamilton

09:33:25 Rep. Read joined the meeting.

09:33:49 Paul Taylor, OPI

09:38:49 Rep. John Fitzpatrick

09:39:08 Lance Melton, MSBA

09:39:19 Rep. Llew Jones

09:40:01 Lance Melton, MSBA

09:41:03 Rep. Jim Hamilton

09:41:13 Lance Melton, MSBA

**Closing Statement:**

09:41:56 Rep. Naarah Hastings (R), HD 50, closed the hearing on HB 396.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 396 - Require school trustees to admit resident children on a part-time basis**

09:42:20 **Motion:** Rep. Bob Keenan moved that **HB 396 DO PASS.**

**Discussion:**

09:42:38 Rep. Jim Hamilton

09:42:20 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 426 - Revising laws relating to inmates approaching parole eligibility or discharge**

09:44:10 **Motion:** Rep. Bob Keenan moved that **HB 426 DO PASS.**

**Discussion:**

09:44:16 Rep. Bill Mercer

09:44:36 Quinn Holzer

09:44:10 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 124 - Revise corporate income tax apportionment**

09:45:12 **Motion:** Rep. Bob Keenan moved that **SB 124 BE CONCURRED IN.**

**Discussion:**

09:46:13 Rep. Llew Jones

09:46:53 Rep. Jim Hamilton

09:45:12 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 121 - Reduce top marginal income tax rate and increase EITC**

09:45:48        **Motion:** Rep. Bob Keenan moved that **SB 121 BE CONCURRED IN.**

09:49:26        **Motion:** Rep. Jim Hamilton moved that **SB 121 BE AMENDED.**

**Discussion:**

09:46:00        Rep. Nave joined the meeting.

09:50:33        Rep. Llew Jones

09:51:36        Rep. Jim Hamilton

[EXHIBIT\(230227APHa1\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(230227APHa2\)](#)

09:49:26        **Vote:** Motion failed 16 - 7 by roll call vote with Rep. Caferro, Rep. Hamilton, Rep. Keogh, Rep. Kerr-Carpenter, Rep. Stewart Peregoy, Rep. Tuss, Rep. Windy Boy, voting yes.  
Rep. Caferro, Rep. Windy Boy, By Proxy

10:04:26        **Motion:** Rep. Bob Keenan moved that **SB 121 BE CONCURRED IN.**

**Discussion:**

10:06:39        Rep. Windy Boy joined the meeting.

10:04:26        **Vote:** Motion carried 16 - 7 by roll call vote with Rep. Caferro, Rep. Hamilton, Rep. Keogh, Rep. Kerr-Carpenter, Rep. Stewart Peregoy, Rep. Tuss, Rep. Windy Boy, voting no.  
Rep. Caferro, Rep. Windy Boy, By Proxy

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment: 10:10:10

Additional Documents: [EXHIBIT\(230227APHaad\)](#)