

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

**Call to Order:** Chair Rep. Larry Brewster-R, on February 28, 2023 at 4:55 PM, in 472

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:**

- Rep. Larry Brewster, Chair (R)
- Rep. Marta Bertoglio, Vice Chair (R)
- Rep. Jill Cohenour, Vice Chair (D)
- Rep. Laurie Bishop (D)
- Rep. Sherry Essman (R)
- Rep. Steven Galloway (R)
- Rep. Steve Gist (R)
- Rep. Steve Gunderson (R)
- Rep. Scot Kerns (R)
- Rep Kelly Kortum (D)
- Rep. Jennifer Lynch (D)
- Rep. Linda Reksten (R)
- Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe (D)
- Rep. Courtenay Sprunger (R)
- Rep. Mark Thane (D)
- Rep. Katie Zolnikov (R)

**Staff Present:**

- LuCinda Blair, Secretary
- Laura Sankey Keip, Research Analyst

**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 and Date Posted:

- HB 675 2/25/2023
- HB 699 2/25/2023
- HB 708 2/25/2023
- HB 789 2/25/2023
- HB 813 2/25/2023

Executive Action:

- HB 524 DO PASS AS AMENDED
- HB 618 BE TABLED
- HB 675 DO PASS
- HB 699 BE TABLED

HB 708 BE TABLED  
HB 789 BE TABLED  
HB 813 BE TABLED

**HEARING ON HB 708 – Establish governance requirements for non-profit hospitals**

**Opening Statement:**

16:59:00 Rep. Jane Gillette (R), HD 64, opened the hearing on HB 708, Establish governance requirements for non-profit hospitals.

**Proponent Testimony:**

None

**Opponent Testimony:**

17:04:35 Becky Franks, Bozeman Health  
17:06:50 Adrienna Hines, Benefis Healthcare  
17:07:54 Meg Jacoby, Self  
17:10:25 Aidan Myhre, Logan Health  
17:12:13 Adam Jespersen, Montana Non-Profit Association (MNPA)  
17:14:39 Bob Olson, Montana Hospital Association (MHA)  
17:15:48 Jen Alderfer, St. Vincent Healthcare and Intermountain Health  
17:18:25 Paul Kanning, Self  
17:19:16 Bill Warden, Shodair Children's Hospital

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

None

**Questions from Committee:**

17:20:20 Rep. Scot Kerns  
17:20:40 Aidan Myhre, Logan Health  
17:22:15 Bob Olson, MHA  
17:22:43 Rep. Steve Gist  
17:23:00 Rep. Jane Gillette  
17:24:15 Rep. Mark Thane

**Closing Statement:**

17:24:35 Rep. Jane Gillette (R), HD 64, closed the hearing on HB 708.

**HEARING ON HB 699 – Allow sheriffs to have expenditure control over sheriff’s office budget**

**Opening Statement:**

17:27:35 Rep. Steve Gunderson (R), HD 1, opened the hearing on HB 699, Allow sheriffs to have expenditure control over sheriff’s office budget.

**Proponent Testimony:**

17:29:16 Brian Heino, Flathead County Sheriff  
17:30:03 Darin Short, Lincoln County Sheriff  
17:33:32 Brian Thompson, Montana Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association (MSPOA)  
EXHIBIT

**Opponent Testimony:**

17:38:21 Roman Zylawy, Montana Association of Counties (MACo)  
17:39:00 Don Jones, Self  
17:40:49 Eric Bryson, Montana Association of Counties (MACo)  
EXHIBIT  
17:45:33 Jason Strouf, Self  
17:46:18 Josh Letcher, Lincoln County Commission  
17:48:30 Larry Hendrickson, Liberty County Commission  
17:48:58 George Real Bird III, Self  
17:50:53 Gordon Oelkers, Roosevelt County Commission

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

None

**Questions from Committee:**

17:52:48 Rep. Steve Gist  
17:53:15 Brian Thompson, MSPOA

17:55:38 Rep. Scot Kerns  
17:56:59 Rep. Courtenay Sprunger  
17:58:50 Brian Heino, Flathead County  
17:59:45 Eric Bryson, MACo

**Closing Statement:**

18:04:25 Rep. Steve Gunderson (R), HD 1, closed the hearing on HB 699.

**HEARING ON HB 789 – Revise laws related to the alteration of county boundaries**

**Opening Statement:**

18:06:00 Rep. Lyn Hellegaard (R), HD 97, opened the hearing on HB 789, Revise laws related to the alteration of county boundaries.

**Proponent Testimony:**

None

**Opponent Testimony:**

18:07:30 Eric Bryson, Montana Association of Counties (MACo)  
18:09:00 Ron Nye, Madison County Commission

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

None

**Questions from Committee:**

None

**Closing Statement:**

18:10:15 Rep. Lyn Hellegaard (R), HD 97, closed the hearing on HB 789.

18:11:00 **Recessed**

18:14:20 **Reconvened**

**HEARING ON HB 813 – Allow for the creation of fire protection authorities**

**Opening Statement:**

18:14:30 Rep. Tony Brockman (R), HD 9, opened the hearing on HB 813, Allow for the creation of fire protection authorities.

**Proponent Testimony:**

18:18:00 Rich Cowger, Montana Fire Alliance (MFA)  
18:22:10 Greg Tryon, Central Valley Fire District, Gallatin County  
18:23:33 Frank Dahlquist, West Valley Fire and Rescue (WVFR)  
18:25:47 Andy Ekblad, Montana State Council of Professional Firefighters (MSCPF)  
18:27:44 Lyn Stimpson, Montana City Volunteer Fire Department, Jefferson County (MCVFD)  
18:28:50 BJ Klose, Dillon Volunteer Fire Department (DVFD)  
18:30:37 Bruce Suenram, Self

**Opponent Testimony:**

18:31:54 Julia Altemus, Montana Wood Products Association (MWPA)  
18:35:35 Peggy Trenk, Treasure State Resources Association (TSRA)

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

None

**Questions from Committee:**

18:37:10 Rep. Steve Gist  
18:37:25 BJ Klose, DVFD  
18:38:45 Rep. Scot Kerns  
18:39:37 Rep. Steve Gunderson  
18:40:30 Lyn Stimpson, MCVFD  
18:41:50 Julia Altemus, MWPA  
18:43:10 Rep. Steven Galloway

**Closing Statement:**

18:45:30 Rep. Tony Brockman (R), HD 9, closed the hearing on HB 813.

18:47:45 Vice Chair Marta Bertoglio assumes the chair.

**HEARING ON HB 675 – Authorize consolidation of county and municipal water and/or sewer districts**

**Opening Statement:**

18:48:10 Rep. Larry Brewster (R), HD 44, opened the hearing on HB 675, Authorize consolidation of county and municipal water and/or sewer districts.

**Proponent Testimony:**

18:52:22 Steve Turkiewicz, City of Billings

**Opponent Testimony:**

None

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

None

**Questions from Committee:**

18:53:50 Rep. Laurie Bishop  
18:54:10 Rep. Larry Brewster  
18:54:40 Rep. Steve Gunderson

**Closing Statement:**

18:56:10 Rep. Larry Brewster (R), HD 44, closed the hearing on HB 675.

18:56:30 Chair Larry Brewster resumes the chair.

18:59:00 **Recessed**

19:18:30 **Reconvened**

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 708 – Establish governance requirements for non-profit hospitals**

- 19:18:40 **Motion:** Vice Chair Marta Bertoglio moved that **HB 708 DO PASS.**
- 19:19:00 **Substitute Motion:** Vice Chair Jill Cohenour moved that **HB 708 BE TABLED.**
- Vote:** Motion carried 10-6 by roll call vote with Rep. Brewster, Rep. Galloway, Rep. Gunderson, Rep. Kerns, Rep. Seekins-Crowe, Rep. Zolnikov, voting no.  
Rep. Zolnikov, By Proxy

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 699 – Allow sheriffs to have expenditure control over sheriff's office budget**

- 19:21:10 **Motion:** Vice Chair Marta Bertoglio moved that **HB 699 DO PASS.**
- Vote:** Motion failed 8-8 by roll call vote with Rep. Brewster, Rep. Essman, Rep. Galloway, Rep. Gist, Rep. Gunderson, Rep. Seekins-Crowe, Rep. Sprunger, Rep. Zolnikov, voting yes.  
Rep. Zolnikov, By Proxy
- 19:23:44 **Motion:** Vice Chair Jill Cohenour moved that **HB 699 BE TABLED.**  
Without objection, so ordered.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 789 – Revise laws related to the alteration of county boundaries**

- 19:24:00 **Motion:** Vice Chair Marta Bertoglio moved that **HB 789 DO PASS.**
- 19:24:15 **Substitute Motion:** Vice Chair Jill Cohenour moved that **HB 789 BE TABLED.**
- Vote:** Motion carried 14-2 by voice vote with Rep. Gunderson, Rep. Zolnikov, voting no.  
Rep. Zolnikov, By Proxy

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 813 – Allow for the creation of fire authorities**

- 19:25:07 **Motion:** Vice Chair Marta Bertoglio moved that **HB 813 DO PASS.**
- 19:25:45 **Substitute Motion:** Rep. Steve Gunderson moved that **HB 813 BE TABLED.**
- Vote:** Motion carried 11-5 by roll call vote with Rep. Bishop, Rep. Cohenour, Rep. Kortum, Rep. Lynch, Rep. Thane, voting no.  
Rep. Thane, By Proxy

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 675 – Authorize consolidation of county and municipal water and/or sewer districts**

19:27:05 **Motion:** Vice Chair Marta Bertoglio moved that **HB 675 DO PASS.**

**Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 618 – Revise laws related to special districts**

19:28:20 **Motion:** Vice Chair Marta Bertoglio moved that **HB 618 DO PASS.**

19:28:40 **Substitute Motion:** Vice Chair Jill Cohenour moved that **HB 618 BE TABLED.**

**Vote:** Motion carried 13-3 by roll call vote with Rep. Brewster, Rep. Gunderson, Rep. Kerns, voting no.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 534 – Revise collections limit for actions brought before city court**

19:30:05 **Motion:** Chair Larry Brewster moved that **HB 534 BE TAKEN FROM THE TABLE.**

**Vote:** Motion carried 10-4 by roll call vote with Rep. Galloway, Rep. Gunderson, Rep. Kerns, Rep. Sprunger, voting no.

19:31:50 **Motion:** Vice Chair Marta Bertoglio moved that **HB 534 DO PASS.**

19:32:00 **Motion:** Vice Chair Marta Bertoglio moved that **HB 534 BE AMENDED.**

**Vote:** Motion carried 10-6 by roll call vote with Rep. Essman, Rep. Galloway, Rep. Gunderson, Rep. Kerns, Rep. Reksten, Rep. Sprunger, voting no.

19:35:10 **Motion:** Vice Chair Marta Bertoglio moved that **HB 534 DO PASS AS AMENDED.**

19:35:20 **Substitute Motion:** Rep. Steve Gunderson moved that **HB 534 BE TABLED.**

**Vote:** Motion failed 10-6 by roll call vote with Rep. Essman, Rep. Galloway, Rep. Gunderson, Rep. Kerns, Rep. Reksten, Rep. Sprunger, voting yes.

19:35:50 **Motion:** Vice Chair Marta Bertoglio moved that **HB 534 DO PASS AS AMENDED.**

**Vote:** Motion carried 13-3 by roll call vote with Rep. Essmann, Rep. Gunderson, Rep. Kerns, voting no.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment: 19:04:37

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LuCinda Blair, Secretary

Additional Documents: EXHIBIT(230228LOH)