

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

Call to Order: Chair Amy Regier-R, on March 24, 2023 at 8:01 AM, in 137

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Rep. Amy Regier, Chair (R)
Rep. Laurie Bishop, Vice Chair (D)
Rep. Brandon Ler, Vice Chair (R)
Rep. Jennifer Carlson (R)
Rep. Lee Deming (R)
Rep. Neil Duram (R)
Rep. Jodee Etchart (R)
Rep. Tom France (D)
Rep. Donavon Hawk (D)
Rep. Caleb Hinkle (R)
Rep. Jedediah Hinkle (R)
Rep. SJ Howell (D)
Rep. Greg Kmetz (R)
Rep. Casey Knudsen (R)
Rep. Wayne Rusk (R)
Rep. Laura Smith (D)

Members Excused: Rep. Kim Abbott (D)
Rep. Braxton Mitchell (R)
Rep. Lola Sheldon-Galloway (R)
Rep. Zoey Zephyr (D)

Staff Present: Jamie Van Valkenburg, Secretary
Rachel Weiss, 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 & Date Posted:

HB 479 03/23/2023
SB 169 03/16/2023
SB 172 03/20/2023
SB 180 03/16/2023

SB 184 03/16/2023
SB 216 03/16/2023
SB 268 03/16/2023
SB 277 03/20/2023

Executive Action:

HEARING ON SB 216 - Revise laws related to litigation and products

Opening Statement:

08:02:34 Sen. Steve Fitzpatrick (R), SD 10, opened the hearing on SB 216, Revise laws related to litigation and products.

Proponent Testimony:

08:08:14 Charles Robison, Montana Chamber of Commerce

[EXHIBIT\(230324JUH1\)](#)

08:09:52 Lee Mickus, American Tort Reform Association

08:12:42 Ronda Wiggers, National Federation of Independent Businesses

08:13:50 Dan Brooks, Billings Chamber of Commerce

08:14:47 Bryan Wood, Woods Power Grip

Opponent Testimony:

08:16:26 Al Smith, Montana Lawyers Association

[EXHIBIT\(230324JUH2\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(230324JUH3\)](#)

08:20:44 Amanda Frickle, American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

08:23:04 Jim Hunt, Montana Trial Lawyers

08:26:17 Adam Haight, American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

08:27:07 Domenic Cossi, Self

08:28:39 Mark Person, Self

08:30:18 Brett DeBruycker, Self

08:31:42 Monte Beck, Self
08:33:11 Jory Ruggiero, Self
08:35:09 Anthony Jackson, Self
08:36:22 Alexander Blewett, Self
08:37:54 Tom Copenhaver, Self

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

08:39:36 Rep. Casey Knudsen
09:08:27 Bryan Wood

Closing Statement:

09:09:31 Sen. Steve Fitzpatrick (R), SD 10, closed the hearing on SB 216.

HEARING ON SB 277 - Revise laws relating to victims of crime

Opening Statement:

09:09:48 Sen. Shane Morigeau (D), SD 95, opened the hearing on SB 277, Revise laws relating to victims of crime.

Discussion:

[EXHIBIT\(230324JUH4\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(230324JUH5\)](#)

Proponent Testimony:

09:20:38 Robin Turner, Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
09:22:50 Kristi Bice, Self

Opponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

None

Closing Statement:

09:24:44 Sen. Shane Morigeau (D), SD 95, closed the hearing on SB 277.

HEARING ON SB 180 - Generally revise court-appointed special advocate and guardian ad litem laws

Opening Statement:

09:27:05 Sen. Dennis Lenz (R), SD 53, opened the hearing on SB 180, Generally revise court-appointed special advocate and guardian ad litem laws.

Proponent Testimony:

09:31:06 Denise Johnson, Montana Child Protection Alliance

Opponent Testimony:

09:32:27 April Barnings, Montana Casa

09:34:51 Alison Dunne, Casa

09:38:40 Devonna McCartney, Casa

09:41:09 Leslie Halligan, Self

09:43:42 Paulina Roberts, Self

09:45:28 Cherie LeBlanc-Dyba, Casa

Informational Witness Testimony:

09:47:19 Chase Rosario, State Coordinator for CASA

09:48:33 Nikki Grossberg, Child and Family Services Division

Questions from Committee:

09:49:06 Rep. Jodee Etchart

09:58:50 Leslie Halligan

Closing Statement:

09:59:21 Sen. Dennis Lenz (R), SD 53, closed the hearing on SB 180.

HEARING ON SB 184 - Revise procedural requirements in child abuse and neglect proceedings

Opening Statement:

10:01:50 Sen. Dennis Lenz (R), SD 53, opened the hearing on SB 184, Revise procedural requirements in child abuse and neglect proceedings.

Proponent Testimony:

10:07:28 Denise Johnson, Montana Child Protection Alliance

Opponent Testimony:

10:09:09 Bruce Spencer, Montana Judges Association

10:12:29 Heather Webster, Yellowstone County Attorney's Office

Informational Witness Testimony:

10:13:56 Nikki Grossberg, Child and Family Services Division

10:14:16 Brian Smith, Office of the Public Defender

Questions from Committee:

10:14:48 Rep. Jennifer Carlson

10:20:30 Brian Smith

Closing Statement:

10:21:42 Sen. Dennis Lenz (R), SD 53, closed the hearing on SB 184.

HEARING ON HB 479 - Provide appropriation for DOJ to assume law enforcement PL-280

Opening Statement:

10:26:04 Rep. Joe Read (R), HD 93, opened the hearing on HB 479, Provide appropriation for DOJ to assume law enforcement PL-280.

Proponent Testimony:

10:38:44 Gale Decker, Lake County Commissioner

Opponent Testimony:

10:40:51 Lex Pierre, Look up his tribe name

Informational Witness Testimony:

10:45:32 Nate Thomas, Department of Justice

Questions from Committee:

10:45:56 Rep. Donavon Hawk

10:47:04 Rep. Joe Read-R

Closing Statement:

10:47:39 Rep. Joe Read (R), HD 93, closed the hearing on HB 479.

HEARING ON SB 172 - Generally revise bail bond laws

Opening Statement:

10:53:15 Sen. Chris Friedel (R), SD 26, opened the hearing on SB 172, Generally revise bail bond laws.

Proponent Testimony:

10:57:43 Frank Cote, Office of the State Auditor

10:59:18 John Looney, Montana Bail Agents Association

11:01:33 John Willoughby, Montana Bail Association

Opponent Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

11:02:36 Rep. Jennifer Carlson

11:05:18 Sen. Chris Friedel-R

11:05:48 John Looney

Closing Statement:

11:07:34 Sen. Chris Friedel (R), SD 26, closed the hearing on SB 172.

HEARING ON SB 169 - Generally revise punitive damage laws

Opening Statement:

11:10:52 Sen. Greg Hertz (R), SD 6, opened the hearing on SB 169, Generally revise punitive damage laws.

Proponent Testimony:

None

Opponent Testimony:

11:21:03 Al Smith, Montana Trial Lawyers Association

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

11:24:22 Rep. Jennifer Carlson

11:34:54 Sen. Greg Hertz-R

Closing Statement:

11:35:08 Sen. Greg Hertz (R), SD 6, closed the hearing on SB 169.

HEARING ON SB 268 - Generally revise short-term rental laws

Opening Statement:

11:36:02 Sen. Greg Hertz (R), SD 6, opened the hearing on SB 268, Generally revise short-term rental laws.

Proponent Testimony:

11:45:53 Leslie Everett, Self

11:49:11 Brian Wells, Self

11:51:45 Sam Sill, Montana Association of Realtors

11:53:10 DruAnn Robidou, Self
11:55:43 John Robidou, Self
11:56:55 Leslie Feigel, Livingston Chamber of Commerce
12:01:43 Stephanie Baucus, Mountain Homes
12:01:57 Kim Kaiser, Self

Opponent Testimony:

12:03:31 Andy Skinner, Self
12:05:54 Daniel Carlino, Self
12:07:41 Robin Turner, City Of Whitefish
12:10:15 Jake Brown, Shelter Whitefish
12:11:12 Caitlin Piserchia, Montana Sierra Club
12:13:14 Ethan Hanley, Associated Students of the University of Montana
12:13:36 John Metropoulus, Air BnB
12:16:28 Greg Lynch, Self
12:17:34 Derke Goldman, Self
12:18:45 Jana Richter, Self
12:20:04 Izzy Milch, Forward Montana
12:21:06 William Marchese, Self
12:22:05 Tirza Asbell, Montana Women Vote
12:22:36 Danielle Vazquez, Self
12:23:14 Alanah Griffith, Self
12:24:14 Renata Munfrada, City Of Bozeman

Informational Witness Testimony:

12:25:32 Eric Copland, Department of Labor and Industry

Questions from Committee:

12:26:11 Rep. Neil Duram

12:36:01 Sen. Greg Hertz-R

Closing Statement:

12:37:13 Sen. Greg Hertz (R), SD 6, closed the hearing on SB 268.

12:40:48 **Committee Discussion:** Meeting on Saturday

12:41:04 Chair Amy Regier

12:41:15 Rep. Jennifer Carlson

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 12:41:45

Jamie Van Valkenburg, Secretary

Additional Documents: [EXHIBIT\(230324JUHaad\)](#)