

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

Call to Order: Chair Steve Gunderson-R, on March 24, 2023 at 2:16 PM, in 172

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Rep. Steve Gunderson, Chair (R)
Rep. Steve Gist, Vice Chair (R)
Rep. Marilyn Marler, Vice Chair (D)
Rep. Jill Cohenour (D)
Rep. Ross Fitzgerald (R)
Rep. Marty Malone (R)
Rep. Russel Miner (R)
Rep. Gary Parry (R)
Rep. Sue Vinton (R)
Rep. Kenneth Walsh (R)
Rep. Marvin Weatherwax (D)

Members Excused: Rep. Tom France (D)
Rep. Jedediah Hinkle (R)
Rep. Jonathan Karlen (D)
Rep. Rhonda Knudsen (R)

Staff Present: LJ Jennings, Secretary
Joe Kolman, Research Analyst
John Olson, 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 240 03/16/2023
SB 426 03/16/2023
SB 448 03/16/2023

Executive Action:

SB 17
SB 42
SB 219
SB 237

14:17:23 Rep. Hinkle has arrived
14:26:24 Rep. France has arrived
14:30:31 **Recessed**
14:47:23 **Reconvened**

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 17 - Revise oversight of stream gauge network

14:47:39 **Motion:** Vice Chair Steve Gist moved that **SB 17 BE CONCURRED IN.**
10:22:13 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.
14:47:39 **Carrier Assigned:** Rep. Jill Cohenour

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 42 - Revise laws related to easements on state lands

14:48:45 **Motion:** Vice Chair Steve Gist moved that **SB 42 BE CONCURRED IN.**
14:48:55 **Motion:** Vice Chair Steve Gist moved that **SB 42 BE AMENDED.**
10:22:13 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.
14:49:47 **Motion:** Vice Chair Steve Gist moved that **SB 42 BE CONCURRED IN AS AMENDED.**
10:22:13 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.
14:49:47 **Carrier Assigned:** Rep. Steve Gunderson

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 219 - Revise wildfire suppression laws

14:50:16 **Motion:** Vice Chair Steve Gist moved that **SB 219 BE CONCURRED IN.**
14:50:25 **Motion:** Vice Chair Steve Gist moved that **SB 219 BE AMENDED.**
10:22:13 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.
14:51:00 **Motion:** Vice Chair Steve Gist moved that **SB 219 BE CONCURRED IN AS AMENDED.**
10:22:13 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.
14:51:00 **Carrier Assigned:** Rep. Jonathan Karlen

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 237 - Require development plans for public water and wastewater system connections

14:51:45 **Motion:** Vice Chair Steve Gist moved that **SB 237 BE CONCURRED IN.**

10:22:13 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

14:51:45 **Carrier Assigned:** Rep. Sue Vinton

14:52:38 **Recessed**

14:52:50 Rep. Weatherwax has left

14:54:07 Rep. Walsh has left

14:54:15 Rep. Vinton has left

15:10:12 **Reconvened**

HEARING ON SB 448 - Clarify law on immediate attendance for slash burning

Opening Statement:

15:08:06 Sen. Mike Cuffe (R), SD 1, opened the hearing on SB 448, Clarify law on immediate attendance for slash burning.

Proponent Testimony:

15:10:41 Jason Todhunter, Montana Logging Association, (MLA)

15:16:06 Matt Arno, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, (DNRC)

15:18:17 Julia Altemus, Montana Wood Products Association, (MWPA)

Opponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

15:19:55 Bo Wilkins, Department of Environmental Quality, (DEQ)

Questions from Committee:

15:20:31 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle

15:21:24 Sen. Mike Cuffe-R

15:22:56 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle
15:24:17 Matt Arno, DNRC
15:25:27 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle
15:25:31 Matt Arno, DNRC
15:25:59 Rep. Gary Parry
15:26:24 Matt Arno, DNRC
15:26:55 Rep. Gary Parry
15:27:29 Sen. Mike Cuffe-R
15:27:38 Rep. Gary Parry
15:28:05 Jason Todhunter, MLA
15:28:51 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle
15:29:33 Bo Wilkins, DEQ
15:29:55 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle
15:30:08 Bo Wilkins, DEQ
15:30:20 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle
15:30:50 Matt Arno, DNRC
15:31:16 Vice Chair Steve Gist
15:31:36 Matt Arno, DNRC
15:32:00 Rep. Tom France
15:32:30 Matt Arno, DNRC

Closing Statement:

15:33:13 Sen. Mike Cuffe (R), SD 1, closed the hearing on SB 448.

15:55:22 Rep. Karlen has arrived

HEARING ON SB 240 - Exempt certain subdivisions from environmental review

Opening Statement:

15:34:44 Sen. Jason Small (R), SD 21, opened the hearing on SB 240, Exempt certain subdivisions from environmental review.

Proponent Testimony:

15:36:45 Lindsay Krywaruchka, Department of Environmental Quality, (DEQ)

Opponent Testimony:

15:39:01 Ann Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center, (MEIC)

15:42:20 Jocelyn Leroux, Montana Conservation Voters, (MVC)

15:44:25 Amy Seaman, Montana Audubon

15:46:36 Barbara Miller, Self

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

14:56:43 Vice Chair Gist assumed position of the Chair.

15:26:04 Chair Gunderson assumed position of the Chair.

15:49:30 Rep. Gary Parry

15:50:19 Lindsey Krywaruchka, DEQ

15:50:45 Rep. Gary Parry

15:51:06 Lindsey Krywaruchka, DEQ

15:51:43 Rep. Gary Parry

15:52:05 Lindsey Krywaruchka, DEQ

15:52:18 Chair Steve Gunderson

15:52:36 Lindsey Krywaruchka, DEQ

15:52:50 Chair Steve Gunderson

15:53:06 Lindsey Krywaruchka, DEQ

15:53:31 Vice Chair Marilyn Marler

15:54:36 Lindsey Krywaruchka, DEQ

15:55:58 Vice Chair Marilyn Marler

15:56:34 Rachel Clark, Department of Environmental Quality, (DEQ)

15:57:08 Vice Chair Marilyn Marler

15:57:09 Rachel Clark, DEQ

15:57:34 Vice Chair Marilyn Marler

15:57:49 Rachel Clark, DEQ

15:57:56 Chair Steve Gunderson

15:58:12 Rachel Clark, DEQ

15:58:36 Chair Steve Gunderson

15:58:41 Rachel Clark, DEQ

15:58:58 Chair Steve Gunderson

15:59:10 Rachel Clark, DEQ

15:59:14 Rep. Jill Cohenour

15:59:29 Rep. Tom France

16:00:00 Rachel Clark, DEQ

16:00:07 Rep. Jill Cohenour

16:00:29 Rachel Clark, DEQ

16:00:59 Rep. Jill Cohenour

16:01:06 Rachel Clark, DEQ

16:01:13 Rep. Jill Cohenour

16:01:41 Lindsey Krywaruchka, DEQ

16:02:09 Rep. Gary Parry

16:02:32 Lindsey Krywaruchka, DEQ
16:02:57 Rep. Tom France
16:03:47 Lindsey Krywaruchka, DEQ
16:03:52 Rachel Clark, DEQ
16:04:23 Rep. Tom France
16:04:43 Rachel Clark, DEQ
16:04:58 Rep. Tom France
16:05:43 Ann Hedges, MEIC
16:06:40 Rep. Tom France
16:06:53 Ann Hedges, MEIC
16:07:26 Rep. Tom France
16:07:33 Rachel Clark, DEQ
16:09:01 Rep. Gary Parry
16:09:34 Rachel Clark, DEQ
16:10:05 Rep. Gary Parry
16:10:57 Rachel Clark, DEQ

Closing Statement:

16:11:40 Sen. Jason Small (R), SD 21, closed the hearing on SB 240.

HEARING ON SB 426 - Revising the definition of natural gas

Opening Statement:

16:12:39 Sen. Jason Small (R), SD 21, opened the hearing on SB 426, Revising the definition of natural gas.

Proponent Testimony:

- 16:15:36 Shelby DeMars, Montana Association of Oil, Gas and Coal Counties,
(MAOGCC)
- 16:18:34 Richard Dunbar, Philips County Commissioner
- 16:19:06 Justin Wickum, Liberty County Commissioner

Proponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

- 16:20:34 Tyler Flaig, Montana Department of Revenue, (DOR)

Questions from Committee:

- 16:21:14 Rep. Marty Malone
- 16:21:26 Richard Dunbar, Commissioner
- 16:21:51 Rep. Marty Malone
- 16:22:01 Richard Dunbar, Commissioner
- 16:22:49 Rep. Gary Parry
- 16:23:02 Richard Dunbar, Commissioner
- 16:23:54 Rep. Jill Cohenour
- 16:24:23 Tyler Flaig, DOR
- 16:24:50 Vice Chair Steve Gist
- 16:25:18 Chair Steve Gunderson
- 16:25:34 Shelby DeMars, MAOGCC
- 16:26:18 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle
- 16:27:29 Shelby DeMars, MAOGCC
- 16:27:36 Rep. Russel Miner
- 16:27:56 Shelby DeMars, MAOGCC

Closing Statement:

16:28:31

Sen. Jason Small (R), SD 21, closed the hearing on SB 426.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 16:29:25

LJ Jennings, Secretary

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