

MINUTES
MONTANA SENATE
68th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION
COMMITTEE ON (S) BUSINESS, LABOR, AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Call to Order: Chair Jason Small-R, on February 02, 2023 at 8:31 AM, in 422

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Sen. Jason Small, Chair (R)
Sen. Willis Curdy, Vice Chair (D)
Sen. Mark Noland, Vice Chair (R)
Sen. Steve Fitzpatrick (R)
Sen. Mike Fox (D)
Sen. Bruce Gillespie (R)
Sen. Walt Sales (R)
Sen. Terry Vermeire (R)

Members Excused: Sen. Jason Ellsworth (R)
Sen. Christopher Pope (D)

Staff Present: Daisy Rhodes, Secretary
Erin Sullivan, Attorney

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 165 01/31/2023

SB 178 01/31/2023

SB 209 01/31/2023

SB 216 01/31/2023

SB 236 01/31/2023

Executive Action:

HEARING ON SB 165 - Establishing a duty of cooperation relating to insurance policies

Opening Statement:

08:32:10 Sen. Barry Usher (R), SD 40, opened the hearing on SB 165, Establishing a duty of cooperation relating to insurance policies.

Proponent Testimony:

08:34:31 Charles Robison, Montana Chamber of Commerce (MtCoC) and Montana Manufacturing Association (MMA)

[EXHIBIT\(230202BUSa1\)](#)

08:38:38 Brad Dantic, Alps Property and Casualty Insurance Company

[EXHIBIT\(230202BUSa2\)](#)

08:45:04 Aimee Grmoljez, American Property and Casualty Insurers of America (APCIA)

08:47:07 Peter Strauss, Montana Self Insurers Association

08:47:39 Jessie Luther, Montana Hospital Association (MHA)

08:48:29 Cary Hegreberg, Montana Banker Association

08:49:09 John Iverson, Montana Tavern Association (MTA), and Independent Insurance Agents of Montana

08:51:04 Robert Phillips, self

08:57:31 Scott Tuxbury, self

Opponent Testimony:

09:00:41 Jim Hunt, Montana Trial Lawyers Association (MTLA)

09:04:38 Al Smith, Montana Trial Lawyers Association (MTLA)

09:10:46 Frank Cote, Commissioner of Security and Insurance Office

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

09:14:22 Vice Chair Mark Noland

09:14:45 Charles Robison, MtCoC and MMA

09:16:19 Vice Chair Mark Noland

09:16:28 Aimee Grmoljez, APCIA

09:17:57 Vice Chair Willis Curdy

09:21:38 Aimee Grmoljez, APCIA

09:22:13 Vice Chair Willis Curdy

09:23:22 Al Smith, MTLA

09:24:10 Sen. Steve Fitzpatrick

09:26:46 Frank Cote, Commissioner of Security and Insurance Office

09:27:24 Vice Chair Mark Noland

09:30:12 Brad Dantic, Alps Insurance Agency

09:30:45 Sen. Steve Fitzpatrick

09:31:34 Brad Dantic, Alps Insurance Agency

09:32:14 Vice Chair Willis Curdy

09:32:53 Brad Dantic, Alps Insurance Agency

Closing Statement:

09:33:36 Sen. Barry Usher (R), SD 40, closed the hearing on SB 165.

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

Opening Statement:

09:38:25 Sen. Steve Fitzpatrick (R), SD 10, opened the hearing on SB 216, Revise laws related to litigation and products.

Proponent Testimony:

09:47:17 Charles Robison, Montana Chamber of Commerce (MtCoC), and Montana Manufacturing Association (MMA)

[EXHIBIT\(230202BUSa3\)](#)

09:49:13 Lee Mickus, Montana Chamber of Commerce (MtCoC), and American Tort Reform Association (ATRA)

09:57:15 Bryan Wood, Wood's Power Grip

10:06:28 Ronda Wiggers, National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB)

10:07:54 Dan Brooks, Billings Chamber of Commerce

10:09:14 Ian McIntosh, American Property Casualty Insurance Association

Opponent Testimony:

10:12:55 Jim Hunt, Montana Trial Lawyers Association (MTLA)

10:20:20 Al Smith, Montana Trial Lawyers Association (MTLA)

10:28:33 Max Kirchhoff, Western Justice Associates

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

10:36:18 Chair Jason Small

10:41:44 Al Smith, MTLA

10:42:07 Sen. Walt Sales

10:44:21 Sen. Steve Fitzpatrick-R

10:44:30 Vice Chair Willis Curdy

10:44:58 Sen. Steve Fitzpatrick-R

10:46:25 Vice Chair Willis Curdy

10:46:41 Sen. Steve Fitzpatrick-R

Closing Statement:

10:47:07 Sen. Steve Fitzpatrick (R), SD 10, closed the hearing on SB 216.

HEARING ON SB 178 - Generally revise cryptocurrency laws

Opening Statement:

10:49:26 Sen. Daniel Zolnikov (R), SD 45, opened the hearing on SB 178,
Generally revise cryptocurrency laws.

Discussion:

[EXHIBIT\(230202BUSa4\)](#)

Proponent Testimony:

10:54:11 Dennis Porter, Satoshi Action Fund

11:01:05 Eric Perterson, Satoshi Action Fund

11:01:54 Henry Kriegel, Americans for Prosperity Montana (AFP-MT)

Opponent Testimony:

11:05:09 Thomas Jodoin, Montana League of Cities and Towns (MLCT)

11:09:00 Keegan Medrano, American Civil Liberties Union of Montana (ACLU)

Questions from Committee:

11:14:09 Vice Chair Mark Noland

11:15:13 Kegan Medrano, ACLU

Opponent Testimony:

11:15:35 Ann Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center (MEIC)

[EXHIBIT\(230202BUSa5\)](#)

11:25:55 Gary Matson, self

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

11:28:29 Chair Jason Small

11:29:12 Sen. Daniel Zolnikov-R

11:29:14 Vice Chair Willis Curdy

11:29:24 Anne Hedges, MEIC

11:30:15 Vice Chair Willis Curdy

11:32:13 Thomas Jodoin, MLCT
11:32:49 Vice Chair Mark Noland
11:38:12 Dennis Porter, Satoshi Action Fund
11:38:58 Chair Jason Small
11:43:45 Dennis Porter, Satoshi Action Fund
11:44:19 Vice Chair Willis Curdy
11:47:49 Anne Hedges, MEIC
11:49:16 Sen. Walt Sales
11:50:55 Sen. Daniel Zolnikov-R

Closing Statement:

11:52:25 Sen. Daniel Zolnikov (R), SD 45, closed the hearing on SB 178.

HEARING ON SB 209 - Revise laws relating to Montana distilleries

Opening Statement:

11:58:24 Sen. Greg Hertz (R), SD 12, opened the hearing on SB 209, Revise laws relating to Montana distilleries.

Proponent Testimony:

12:01:46 Jennifer Hensley, Montana Distillers Guild (MDG)
[EXHIBIT\(230202BUSa6\)](#)
[EXHIBIT\(230202BUSa7\)](#)
12:09:19 Courtney McKee, Headframe Spirits
[EXHIBIT\(230202BUSa8\)](#)
12:14:21 Ethan Kohoutek, Montana Brewers Association and Ten Mile Creek Brewery
12:14:59 Heidi Rosenleaf, Headframe Spirits
12:15:24 Amy Nerison, Liquor Store Owners Association of Montana, and on behalf of Beer and Wine Distributors of Montana

12:15:54 Ryan Montgomery, Montgomery Distillery

12:16:56 Willie Blazer, Willie's Distillery

12:17:37 Matt Melugin, Willie's Distillery

[EXHIBIT\(230202BUSa9\)](#)

12:17:52 Tyrrell Hibbard, Gulch Distillers

12:18:19 Carolina Balliew, Lakeside Distillery

[EXHIBIT\(230202BUSa10\)](#)

12:19:11 Steffen Rasile, Gulch Distillers

12:19:26 Nicolas Lee, Glacier Distilling

12:20:37 Erica Droge, Dryhouse Distillery

Opponent Testimony:

12:22:00 John Iverson, Montana Tavern Association (MTA)

[EXHIBIT\(230202BUSa11\)](#)

12:25:24 Mary Jane Heisler, Montana Tavern Association (MTA)

12:25:48 Tom Heisler, Montana Tavern Association (MTA)

Informational Witness Testimony:

12:26:21 Steve Swanson, Department of Revenue - Alcoholic Beverage Control
Division

Questions from Committee:

12:26:47 Chair Jason Small

12:26:48 Jen Hensley, MDG

Closing Statement:

12:28:49 Sen. Greg Hertz (R), SD 12, closed the hearing on SB 209.

HEARING ON SB 236 - Establish time limited demand standards

Opening Statement:

12:31:50 Sen. Greg Hertz (R), SD 12, opened the hearing on SB 236, Establish time limited demand standards.

Proponent Testimony:

12:34:06 Charles Robison, Montana Chamber of Commerce (MtCoC)

[EXHIBIT\(230202BUSa12\)](#)

12:35:05 Brad Dantic, Alps Insurance Agency

12:36:47 Aimee Grmoljez, American Property and Casualty Insurance Association (APCIA) and on behalf of the Montana Hospital Association, Montana Bankers Association

12:37:18 John Iverson, Montana Tavern Association (MTA) and Independent Insurance Agents of Montana

12:37:35 Scott Tuxbury, self

Opponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

12:39:00 Vice Chair Willis Curdy

12:40:32 Brad Dantic, Alps Insurance Agency

12:41:07 Chair Jason Small

Closing Statement:

12:41:11 Sen. Greg Hertz (R), SD 12, closed the hearing on SB 236.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 12:42:33

Daisy Rhodes, Secretary

Additional Documents: [EXHIBIT\(230202BUSaad\)](#)