

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

**Call to Order:** Chair Jason Small-R, on March 28, 2023 at 8:02 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. Mike Fox (D)  
Sen. Bruce Gillespie (R)  
Sen. Walt Sales (R)  
Sen. Terry Vermeire (R)

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

**Staff Present:** Lynnette Sena, 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:

HB 573 03/23/2023  
SB 516 03/23/2023  
SB 527 03/24/2023  
SB 531 03/24/2023  
SB 535 03/24/2023  
SB 538 03/24/2023

Executive Action:

**HEARING ON SB 535 - Revise lottery laws relating to the board of horseracing**

**Opening Statement:**

08:03:24 Sen. Ryan Lynch (D), SD 76, opened the hearing on SB 535, Revise lottery laws relating to the board of horseracing.

**Proponent Testimony:**

08:04:23 Scott Sales, Montana Lottery

**Opponent Testimony:**

08:09:26 John Hayes, Chairman, Board of Horse Racing (BOHR)

08:15:27 Gary Koeplin, Executive Secretary, Board of Horseracing (BOHR)

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

None

**Questions from Committee:**

08:17:09 Chair Jason Small

08:19:07 John Hayes, BOHR

08:20:18 Vice Chair Mark Noland

08:22:33 John Hayes, BOHR

08:23:00 Sen. Bruce Gillespie

08:23:27 Vice Chair Willis Curdy left the meeting.

08:23:32 Vice Chair Mark Noland left the meeting.

08:25:15 John Hayes, BOHR

08:26:06 Chair Jason Small

08:26:22 John Hayes, BOHR

08:26:53 Sen. Walt Sales

08:27:23 Scott Sales, Montana Lottery

08:29:34 Sen. Bruce Gillespie

08:30:35 Scott Sales, Montana Lottery

**Closing Statement:**

08:31:14 Sen. Ryan Lynch (D), SD 76, closed the hearing on SB 535.

08:31:48 Vice Chair Noland has arrived

08:34:43 Sen. Ellsworth has arrived

**HEARING ON SB 531 - Generally review broadband deployment laws**

**Opening Statement:**

08:34:02 Sen. Daniel Salomon (R), SD 47, opened the hearing on SB 531, Generally review broadband deployment laws.

**Proponent Testimony:**

08:38:07 Misty Giles, Department of Administration (DOA)

[EXHIBIT\(230328BUSa1\)](#)

08:41:32 Geoff Feiss, Broadband Montana

08:44:43 Bridger Mahlam, Charter Communications

08:45:47 Tom Ebzery, Century Link

08:47:33 Aimee Grmoljez, Verizon Wireless

08:49:27 Mark Baker, American Telephone and Telegraph (AT and T)

08:49:56 Rebecca Meyers, Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA)

08:50:48 Karen Alley, Montana Association of Counties (MACo)

08:51:28 Amy Nerison, TriCounty Telephone and Gallatin Wireless

08:52:13 Margaret Morgan, T-Mobile

08:53:02 Charles Robison, Montana Chamber of Commerce (MCOC)

**Opponent Testimony:**

None

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

None

**Questions from Committee:**

08:54:38 Sen. Bruce Gillespie  
08:55:04 Sen. Daniel Salomon-R  
08:55:09 Misty Giles, DOA  
08:55:38 Sen. Bruce Gillespie

**Opponent Testimony:**

08:56:12 Partick Yawakie, Blackfeet Tribe

**Questions from Committee:**

09:01:08 Sen. Mike Fox  
09:01:25 Sen. Daniel Salomon-R  
09:03:13 Sen. Mike Fox  
09:03:47 Sen. Daniel Salomon-R  
09:04:40 Sen. Jason Ellsworth  
09:06:10 Misty Giles, DOA  
09:06:43 Vice Chair Mark Noland  
09:07:08 Misty Giles, DOA  
09:07:49 Vice Chair Mark Noland  
09:08:07 Sen. Walt Sales  
09:10:42 Sen. Daniel Salomon-R

**Closing Statement:**

09:11:40 Sen. Daniel Salomon (R), SD 47, closed the hearing on SB 531.

09:14:37 Sen. Ellsworth has left

**HEARING ON SB 516 - Provide for the Preserving Fertility Act**

**Opening Statement:**

09:14:27 Sen. Jen Gross (D), SD 25, opened the hearing on SB 516, Provide for the Preserving Fertility Act.

**Discussion:**

[EXHIBIT\(230328BUSa2\)](#)

**Proponent Testimony:**

09:23:48 Katie Beall, self

[EXHIBIT\(230328BUSa3\)](#)

09:28:38 Blake Underriner, self

09:30:35 Katlyn Armstrong, self

09:32:20 Carley VonHeeder, self

09:36:26 Becky Franks, Cancer Support Community Montana and on behalf of Logan Health

[EXHIBIT\(230328BUSa4\)](#)

09:37:58 Jeff Shirley, self

09:39:49 Hillary Waldeisen, self

09:42:23 Sen. Christopher Pope joined the meeting.

09:42:50 Lucy Waldeisen, self

09:45:33 Dr. Melody Cunningham, Montana Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

09:46:34 Vice Chair Willis Curdy joined the meeting.

09:47:38 Austin Dayton, self

09:49:33 Ed Beall, self

09:53:11 Dr. Stacy Shomento, self and on behalf of Dr. Colleen Milroy

09:56:43 Sally Beall, self  
09:58:11 Heather O'Hara, Montana Hospital Association (MHA)  
09:59:19 Bill Worden, Bozeman Health

**Opponent Testimony:**

None

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

10:00:11 Mary LeMieux, Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS)  
10:00:38 John Doran, Blue Cross Blue Shield Montana (BCBS-MT)  
10:01:10 Leah Merchant, Montana Cancer Control Programs, Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS)

**Questions from Committee:**

10:01:44 Sen. Bruce Gillespie  
10:02:07 John Doran, BCBS-MT  
10:03:11 Sen. Bruce Gillespie  
10:03:58 Katelyn Armstrong

**Closing Statement:**

10:04:33 Sen. Jen Gross (D), SD 25, closed the hearing on SB 516.  
  
10:09:49 Sen. Fox has left  
10:09:56 Chair Small has left  
10:10:03 Sen. Pope has left

**HEARING ON SB 538 - Generally revise marijuana laws**

**Opening Statement:**

10:07:52 Sen. Chris Friedel (R), SD 26, opened the hearing on SB 538, Generally revise marijuana laws.

**Proponent Testimony:**

10:09:17 Pepper Peterson, Montana Cannabis Guild (MCG)  
10:11:38 Steve Zabawa, Safe Montana  
10:13:16 Sen. Mike Fox joined the meeting.

**Opponent Testimony:**

None

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

10:14:08 Courtney Cosgrove, Department of Revenue (DOR)

**Questions from Committee:**

10:14:43 Sen. Bruce Gillespie  
10:14:45 Sen. Christopher Pope joined the meeting.  
10:15:27 Courtney Crosgrove, DOR  
10:16:06 Sen. Bruce Gillespie  
10:16:23 Sen. Chris Friedel-R  
10:17:05 Sen. Bruce Gillespie  
10:17:58 Pepper Peterson, Montana Cannabis Guild  
10:19:08 Sen. Walt Sales  
10:19:38 Sen. Chris Friedel-R  
10:20:28 Sen. Walt Sales  
10:20:49 Sen. Chris Friedel-R  
10:21:38 Vice Chair Willis Curdy  
10:22:00 Courtney Crosgrove, DOR

**Closing Statement:**

10:22:13 Sen. Chris Friedel (R), SD 26, closed the hearing on SB 538.

**HEARING ON HB 573 - Remove contracts under MT Community Service Act from the MT Procurement Act**

**Opening Statement:**

10:24:16 Rep. Joshua Kassmier (R), HD 27, opened the hearing on HB 573, Remove contracts under MT Community Service Act from the MT Procurement Act.

**Proponent Testimony:**

10:25:03 Jono McKinney, Montana Conservation Corps (MCC)

[EXHIBIT\(230328BUSa5\)](#)

10:28:31 Sen. Christopher Pope joined the meeting.

10:29:14 Pedro Marques, Big Hole Watershed Committee

[EXHIBIT\(230328BUSa6\)](#)

10:33:03 Steve Nelson, self

**Opponent Testimony:**

None

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

10:36:09 Sarah Sadowski, Governor's Office of Community Service

10:36:46 Magan Holmlund, Chief Procurement Officer, Department of Administration (DOA)

**Questions from Committee:**

10:37:21 Vice Chair Mark Noland

10:39:37 Sarah Sadowski, Governors Office of Community Service

10:40:13 Sen. Christopher Pope

10:43:00 Megan Holmlund, DOA

**Closing Statement:**

10:43:27 Rep. Joshua Kassmier (R), HD 27, closed the hearing on HB 573.

**HEARING ON SB 527 - Create Montana Farm Wine and Winegrower License**

**Opening Statement:**

10:45:10 Chair Jason Small (R), SD 21, opened the hearing on SB 527, Create Montana Farm Wine and Winegrower License.

**Proponent Testimony:**

10:46:30 Larry Robertson, Winery Association of Montana and Flathead Lake Vineyard and Winery

10:50:32 Brian McGuire, Winery Association of Montana

10:55:14 Dale Engstrom, Wind Hill Vineyard

10:58:11 Rachel Cone, Montana Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF)

10:58:57 Rachel Prevost, Montana Farmers Union (MFU)

**Opponent Testimony:**

10:59:50 Jessie Luther, Hospitality and Development Association of Montana(HDA) and on behalf of the Montana Tavern Association

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

11:05:25 Cort Jensen, Department of Agriculture

11:05:54 Becky Schlauch, Alcoholic and Beverage Control Division- Department of Revenue (ABCD-DOR)

**Questions from Committee:**

11:06:26 Vice Chair Willis Curdy

11:06:59 Becky Schlauch, ABCD-DOR

11:09:04 Sen. Bruce Gillespie

11:10:27 Cort Jensen, Department of Agriculture

11:11:49 Vice Chair Mark Noland

11:12:27 Cort Jensen, Department of Agriculture

11:13:08 Vice Chair Mark Noland

11:13:14 Brian McGuire, Winery Association of Montana

11:14:50 Sen. Walt Sales

11:15:22 Brian McGuire, Winery Association of Montana

11:16:00 Vice Chair Willis Curdy

11:16:38 Brian McGuire, Winery Association of Montana

11:17:11 Vice Chair Mark Noland

11:18:26 Dale Engstrom, Wind Hill Vineyards

11:19:40 Sen. Bruce Gillespie

11:20:37 Larry Robertson, Winery Association of Montana

11:23:20 Vice Chair Mark Noland

11:24:53 Becky Schlauch, ABCD-DOR

11:27:32 Vice Chair Mark Noland

11:27:45 Cort Jensen, Department of Agriculture

11:28:47 Vice Chair Mark Noland

**Closing Statement:**

11:29:07 Chair Jason Small (R), SD 21, closed the hearing on SB 527.

11:30:09 Vice Chair Noland has left

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment: 11:30:59

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Lynnette Sena, Secretary

Additional Documents: [EXHIBIT\(230328BUSaad\)](#)