

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

Call to Order: Chair Mark Noland-R, on March 31, 2023 at 8:04 AM, in 422

ROLL CALL

Members Present: 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)

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

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:

HB 229 03/29/2023
HB 477 03/29/2023
HB 484 03/29/2023
HB 492 03/29/2023
HB 523 03/29/2023
HB 571 03/29/2023
HB 668 03/29/2023

Executive Action:

08:06:24 Sen. Fitzpatrick has left

HEARING ON HB 668 - Revise service contract laws related to motor vehicles and theft

Opening Statement:

08:05:19 Rep. Ross Fitzgerald (R), HD 17, opened the hearing on HB 668, Revise service contract laws related to motor vehicles and theft.

Proponent Testimony:

08:06:30 Sean Slanger, Motor Vehicle Protection Products Association (MVPPA)

[EXHIBIT\(230331BUSa1\)](#)

Opponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

08:11:27 Sen. Bruce Gillespie

08:13:23 Sean Slanger, MVPPA

08:14:31 Vice Chair Willis Curdy

08:14:42 Sean Slanger, MVPPA

08:14:56 Sen. Walt Sales

08:15:57 Sean Slanger, MVPPA

08:16:18 Vice Chair Willis Curdy

08:16:28 Sean Slanger, MVPPA

08:16:57 Vice Chair Mark Noland

08:17:57 Sean Slanger, MVPPA

Closing Statement:

08:18:11 Rep. Ross Fitzgerald (R), HD 17, closed the hearing on HB 668.

08:20:28 Sen. Vermeire has arrived

HEARING ON HB 523 - Require reporting on emergency rental assistance paid to businesses and landlord

Opening Statement:

08:19:10 Rep. Michael Yakawich (R), HD 51, opened the hearing on HB 523, Require reporting on emergency rental assistance paid to businesses and landlord.

Proponent Testimony:

08:22:41 Melissa Higgins, Department of Commerce

08:23:47 Terri Todd, self

Opponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

08:25:22 Sen. Bruce Gillespie

08:26:47 Melissa Higgins, Department of Commerce

08:27:24 Vice Chair Willis Curdy

08:27:46 Melissa Higgins, Department of Commerce

08:28:16 Sen. Walt Sales

08:28:34 Melissa Higgins, Department of Commerce

08:28:45 Sen. Walt Sales

08:29:01 Rep. Michael Yakawich-R

08:30:30 Sen. Walt Sales
08:31:11 Rep. Michael Yakawich-R
08:31:56 Sen. Walt Sales
08:32:52 Melissa Higgins, Department of Commerce

Closing Statement:

08:33:03 Rep. Michael Yakawich (R), HD 51, closed the hearing on HB 523.

HEARING ON HB 571 - Revise statute of limitations laws relating to real property

Opening Statement:

08:35:07 Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe (R), HD 43, opened the hearing on HB 571, Revise statute of limitations laws relating to real property.

Discussion:

[EXHIBIT\(230331BUSa2\)](#)

Proponent Testimony:

08:37:10 Sheridan Johnson, Montana Chamber of Commerce (MCC)
08:39:26 Brian Thompson, Montana Chamber of Commerce (MCC)

Opponent Testimony:

08:40:54 Al Smith, Montana Trial Lawyers Association (MTLA)

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

08:48:17 Sen. Bruce Gillespie
08:49:06 Al Smith, MTLA
08:49:58 Sen. Bruce Gillespie
08:50:09 Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe-R
08:50:25 Brian Thompson, MCC

08:51:52 Sen. Walt Sales
08:52:23 Brian Thompson, MCC
08:53:54 Sen. Walt Sales
08:54:17 Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe-R
08:55:34 Vice Chair Willis Curdy
08:55:50 Al Smith, MTLA

Closing Statement:

08:58:30 Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe (R), HD 43, closed the hearing on HB 571.

HEARING ON HB 477 - Generally revise corporation laws regarding tribal entities

Opening Statement:

09:00:50 Rep. Sharon Stewart Peregoy (D), HD 42, opened the hearing on HB 477, Generally revise corporation laws regarding tribal entities.

Proponent Testimony:

None

Opponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

09:07:35 Richie Melby, Montana Secretary of State's Office (SOS)

Questions from Committee:

09:08:04 Vice Chair Willis Curdy
09:08:30 Rep. Sharon Stewart Peregoy-D
09:08:38 Sen. Bruce Gillespie
09:10:35 Rep. Sharon Stewart Peregoy-D
09:11:52 Sen. Mike Fox

09:12:15 Richie Melby, SOS

[EXHIBIT\(230331BUSa3\)](#)

09:13:24 Sen. Mike Fox

09:14:56 Vice Chair Mark Noland

09:16:19 Richie Melby, SOS

Closing Statement:

09:16:33 Rep. Sharon Stewart Peregoy (D), HD 42, closed the hearing on HB 477.

HEARING ON HB 484 - Establish broadband advisory commission

Opening Statement:

09:19:49 Rep. Katie Sullivan (D), HD 89, opened the hearing on HB 484, Establish broadband advisory commission.

Proponent Testimony:

09:26:55 Sam Forstag, Montana Library Association (MLA)

09:28:13 Jade Bahr, Montana Budget and Policy Center (MBPC)

Opponent Testimony:

09:32:51 Senator Dan Solomon, Senate District 47

Informational Witness Testimony:

09:33:45 Misty Giles, Department of Administration (DOA)

Questions from Committee:

09:33:05 Sen. Bruce Gillespie

09:33:21 Sen. Dan Solomon

09:34:56 Sen. Bruce Gillespie

09:35:23 Rep. Katie Sullivan-D

09:36:45 Vice Chair Mark Noland

09:37:02 Rep. Katie Sullivan-D
09:40:59 Vice Chair Mark Noland
09:46:09 Sen. Dan Solomon
09:46:17 Vice Chair Mark Noland
09:46:59 Sen. Walt Sales
09:48:35 Rep. Katie Sullivan-D
09:49:48 Sen. Walt Sales
09:51:17 Rep. Katie Sullivan-D
09:52:02 Sen. Walt Sales
09:56:04 Missy Giles, DOA
09:57:38 Vice Chair Mark Noland

Closing Statement:

09:57:58 Rep. Katie Sullivan (D), HD 89, closed the hearing on HB 484.

10:02:08 **Recessed**

10:14:40 **Reconvened**

HEARING ON HB 229 - Generally revise marijuana laws related to testing laboratories

Opening Statement:

10:14:52 Rep. Mike Hopkins (R), HD 92, opened the hearing on HB 229, Generally revise marijuana laws related to testing laboratories.

Proponent Testimony:

10:16:54 Jennifer Hensley, Fidelity Diagnostics Laboratory
10:20:05 Kate Cholewa, Montana Cannabis Association
10:20:52 Andrey Umansky, Fidelity Diagnostics Laboratory
10:23:43 Melissa Umansky, Fidelity Diagnostics Laboratory

10:24:52 Joanna Barney, Sacred Sun Farms

Opponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

10:28:47 Cathy Wiegand-Palmer, Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS)

10:29:18 Kristen Barbour, Cannabis Control Division, Department of Revenue (DOR)

10:29:35 Courtney Cosgrove, Cannabis Control Division, Department of Revenue (DOR)

Questions from Committee:

10:30:09 Sen. Bruce Gillespie

10:31:05 Joanna Barney, Sacred Sun Farms

10:32:12 Sen. Bruce Gillespie

10:32:21 Vice Chair Willis Curdy

10:34:34 Kathy Wiegand-Palmer, DPHHS

10:34:55 Courtney Cosgrove, DOR

10:35:36 Vice Chair Willis Curdy

10:35:52 Courtney Cosgrove, DOR

10:36:22 Vice Chair Mark Noland

10:37:48 Courtney Cosgrove, DOR

10:38:01 Sen. Walt Sales

10:39:37 Kathy Wiegand-Palmer, DPHHS

10:40:12 Vice Chair Mark Noland

10:40:51 Kathy Wiegand-Palmer, DPHHS

10:41:03 Chair Jason Small joined the meeting.

10:41:09 Chair Jason Small
10:41:42 Jennifer Hensley, Fidelity Diagnostics
10:42:46 Vice Chair Willis Curdy
10:43:50 Kathy Wiegand-Palmer, DPHHS
10:44:29 Chair Jason Small
10:44:34 Kathy Wiegand-Palmer, DPHHS
10:44:47 Courtney Cosgrove, DOR

Closing Statement:

10:45:13 Rep. Mike Hopkins (R), HD 92, closed the hearing on HB 229.

10:47:06 **Recessed**

11:02:13 **Reconvened**

HEARING ON HB 492 - Revising telecommunications regulation

Opening Statement:

11:02:46 Rep. Katie Zolnikov (R), HD 45, opened the hearing on HB 492, Revising telecommunications regulation.

Proponent Testimony:

11:13:47 Lucus Hamilton, Montana Public Service Commission (PSC)

[EXHIBIT\(230331BUSa4\)](#)

11:17:05 Geoff Feiss, Broadband Montana

Opponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

11:21:14 Garry Duncan, Public Service Commission (PSC)

Questions from Committee:

11:21:38 Sen. Bruce Gillespie
11:24:17 Geoff Feiss, Broadband Montana
11:25:02 Vice Chair Willis Curdy
11:25:36 Lucas Hamilton, PSC
11:25:45 Sen. Walt Sales
11:27:18 Rep. Katie Zolnikov-R
11:28:00 Chair Jason Small
11:32:20 Lucas Hamilton, PSC
11:33:06 Sen. Walt Sales
11:34:13 Lucas Hamilton, PSC
11:34:23 Sen. Bruce Gillespie
11:35:48 Lucas Hamilton, PSC

Closing Statement:

11:36:16 Rep. Katie Zolnikov (R), HD 45, closed the hearing on HB 492.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 11:43:00

Daisy Rhodes, Secretary

Additional Documents: [EXHIBIT\(230331BUSaad\)](#)