

**INTERSTATE AND INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEES
2017-2018 Interim**

Sections 5-11-304 and 305, MCA, authorize the Legislative Council to facilitate Montana's participation in "appropriate interstate, international, and intergovernmental entities" and to make appointments to each organization. The President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, the Minority Leader of the Senate, and the Minority Leader of the House may recommend nominees for the Legislative Council's consideration in making appointments to interstate, international, and intergovernmental entities. If the Legislative Council appoints more than one legislator to participate as a member in an interstate, international, or intergovernmental entity, the number of legislators appointed from the majority party and the minority party must be equal.

The Montana Legislature is a dues-paying member of the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Council of State Governments (West), and the Pacific Northwest Economic Region. Membership or appointment is not necessary to attend the following meetings, however, appointment does not guarantee funding for attendance at NCSL or CSG-West. PNWER reimbursement is statutory.

Dates of upcoming meetings are:

PNWER (LCRG)	July 23-27, 2017 Annual Summit	Portland, Oregon
CSG-West	August 15-19, 2017 Annual Meeting	Tacoma, Washington
NCSL	August 6-9, 2017 Annual Summit	Boston, Massachusetts

National Conference of State Legislatures

Montana is a member of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). The NCSL is a bipartisan organization that serves only legislators and their staffs. NCSL provides research, technical assistance, and opportunities for policymakers to exchange ideas on the most pressing state issues and is an advocate for the interests of the states in Congress. NCSL provides opportunities that do not require travel and can be a great source of information.

Legislative Council is responsible for making appointments upon recommendation by leadership. Legislators must be appointed to a committee to participate in voting on policies adopted by standing committees and each state receives a single vote in the Business Meeting at each meeting. (See the preference form and attached information for the areas of jurisdiction for each committee.) Legislators may belong to any number of standing committees.

The Montana Legislature is currently considering funding for Montana's active participation in NCSL during the 2017-2018 interim. The proposed appropriation includes dues and an amount equal to participation for 8 legislators each year of the biennium. NCSL holds two major meetings: the Summit and a Forum in Washington, D.C., in late fall.

The Council of State Governments (CSG, CSG-West)

The Council of State Governments is an organization of all the states and territories of the United States and represents all branches. Montana is also one of 13 states belonging to the Council of State Governments-*West* (CSG-*West*). CSG-*West* provides a "nonpartisan platform for regional cooperation and collaboration among the legislatures of the western states".

The Montana Legislature is currently considering funding for Montana's active participation in CSG during the 2017-2019 interim. The proposed appropriation includes dues and an amount equal to participation for 8 legislators each year of the biennium (2 from each chamber/caucus).

The fundamental work of the CSG is accomplished through policy study committees with legislative representatives from each of the member states. For the 2017-2018 interim, the **Legislative Council** may appoint any number of members to each of the CSG-West committees. (See preference form for specific committees.)

The CSG-West Legislative Council on River Governance is a cooperative association of legislators from Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington that meet to discuss common interests and challenges along the Columbia River basin. This council has a specific membership and a separate budget and has 4 voting members appointed by the **Legislative Council**, and is staffed by the Legislative Environmental Policy Office.

Pacific North West Economic Region

In 2001, the Montana Legislature pledged its participation in the Pacific North West Economic Region (PNWER). The purpose of the PNWER is to synchronize the efforts of neighboring states and provinces to promote greater regional collaboration among the eight entities, enhance the overall competitiveness of the region in international and domestic markets, increase the economic well-being of all citizens in the region, and improve the quality of life of the citizens of the Pacific Northwest. The PNWER may promote its aim by endorsing uniform legislation or policy initiatives enacted by two or more participating states, provinces, or territories. States and provinces eligible to participate in the PNWER include Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Alberta, British Columbia, and the Yukon Territory.

The PNWER consists of a Delegate Council, which includes the Governor or a designee and four legislators from each participating state and four representatives from each participating province and territory, and an Executive Committee consisting of one legislator from each participating state, province, or territory who is a member of the Delegate Council and four of the Governors, Premiers, or Commissioners or their designees.

Policy committees may be established to address specific topics. The **Legislative Council** is authorized under 5-11-301, MCA, to make Montana's policy committee appointments to the PNWER.

The Legislature is currently considering funding for Montana's active participation in PNWER during the 2017-2018 interim. The proposed appropriation includes dues and participation for 4 appointed member-legislator in each year of the biennium.