

2025-2026 INTERIM WORK PLAN -- DRAFT



Civil Rights Violations and Censorship by MUS Committee
(CRV)

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DRAFT -- CRV WORK PLAN, 2025-2026

BACKGROUND AND DUTIES

The 2025 Legislature created a Civil Rights Violations and Censorship by the Montana University System committee (or CRV) through House Bill No. 284 (HB 284). Rep. Caleb Hinkle (R-Belgrade) sponsored the legislation.

HB 284 charges the committee with:

- Gathering testimony from Montana students on any civil rights violations or acts of censorship that students have experienced or witnessed at Montana public universities and colleges; and
- Making findings and recommendations to state and federal officials.

Those findings and recommendations must be sent in physical and electronic format to various federal and state elected officials.

The Legislative Services Division was assigned to provide staff support to the committee and given a \$23,000 appropriation to reimburse committee members for salary, travel, and per diem.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The CRV committee consists of eight legislators, including four from the House of Representatives who are appointed by the speaker of the house and four from the Senate who are appointed by the Senate Committee on Committees. The committee must select a presiding officer and vice presiding officer.

Committee Member	District/ Party	Email
Senator Willis Curdy	D – Missoula	Willis.Curdy@legmt.gov
Senator Mary Ann Dunwell	D – Helena	MaryAnn.Dunwell@legmt.gov
Senator Bob Phalen	R – Lindsey	Bobby.Phalen@legmt.gov
Senator Sue Vinton	R - Billings	Sue.Vinton@legmt.gov
Representative Brian Close	D – Bozeman	Brian.Close@legmt.gov
Representative Melody Cunningham	D – Missoula	Melody.Cunningham@legmt.gov
Representative Caleb Hinkle	R – Belgrade	Caleb.Hinkle@legmt.gov
Representative Greg Overstreet	R – Stevensville	Greg.Overstreet@legmt.gov

PROPOSED MEETING SCHEDULE

HB 284 limits the CRV to three meetings, including the organizational meeting. The committee's \$23,000 budget provides enough funding for three 1-day meetings. This work plan proposes those three meetings occur in Helena to take advantage of the access to Zoom in the Capitol and of Helena's relatively central location to the University System's two largest universities: Montana State University-Bozeman and the University of Montana-Missoula. Other public universities close to Helena are in Butte and Great Falls.

Date	Committee Activities
November 3, 2025	Organizational meeting; review of recent legislative action related to committee's work; public comment
Late Winter/Early Spring 2026 (Late February – March)	Conduct public hearing; discuss draft findings and recommendations for final report
Late Spring/Summer 2026 (May – September)	Finalize findings and recommendations and approve final report; public comment

If this general plan is approved by the committee, staff will conduct a poll of legislators to determine best dates and consult with the presiding officer to set the next meeting dates. Staff will strive to avoid scheduling CRV meetings during known interim committee meetings, student holidays, or spring break.