



## ECONOMIC AFFAIRS INTERIM COMMITTEE

### 69th Montana Legislature

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#### SENATE MEMBERS

Kenneth Bogner  
Ellie Boldman  
Josh Kassmier  
Mark Noland

#### HOUSE MEMBERS

Ed Buttrey  
Brian Close  
Jamie Isaly  
Brandon Ler  
Nelly Nicol  
Peter Strand  
Morgan Thiel

#### COMMITTEE STAFF

Maddelyn Pennington - Secretary  
Jameson Walker - Legal Staff  
Matthew Weaver - Lead Staff

## MINUTES LOG

November 12, 2025  
Day 1 - Room 137  
Helena, Montana

Please note: This document is a Minutes Log and provides annotation of the time elapsed between the beginning of the meeting and the time at which the item was presented or discussed, a motion was made, or a vote was taken. The narrative presented here is provided only as a guide to the audio or video recording of the meeting. The official discussion, motion, or vote is available on the audio or video archive of this meeting. The Legislature does not prepare a transcript of the meeting activities. The time designation may be used to locate the referenced discussion on the audio or video recording of this meeting.

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#### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Brandon Ler, Presiding Officer (R)  
Sen. Ellie Boldman, Vice Presiding Officer (D)  
Sen. Kenneth Bogner (R)  
Rep. Brian Close (D)  
Rep. Jamie Isaly (D)  
Sen. Josh Kassmier (R)  
Rep. Nelly Nicol (R)  
Rep. Peter Strand (D)  
Rep. Morgan Thiel (R)

#### MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Rep. Ed Buttrey (R)  
Sen. Mark Noland (R)

#### MEMBERS ABSENT:

#### STAFF PRESENT:

Maddelyn Pennington, Secretary  
Jameson Walker, Legal Staff

**MONTANA LEGISLATIVE SERVICES DIVISION STAFF:** JERRY HOWE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR • ANGUS MACIVER, DIRECTOR, LEGISLATIVE AUDIT DIVISION • AMY CARLSON, DIRECTOR, LEGISLATIVE FISCAL DIVISION • TODD EVERTS, DIRECTOR, LEGAL SERVICES OFFICE • DALE GOW, CIO, OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION SERVICES • RACHEL WEISS, RESEARCH DIRECTOR • ANGIE CARTER, FINANCIAL SERVICES MANAGER

Matthew Weaver, Lead Staff

**AGENDA ([Attachment 1](#))**

**VISITORS' LIST ([Attachment 2](#))**

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

09:01:36 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM. The committee secretary took roll.  
09:02:29 Maddelyn Pennington, Secretary, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 33 - RX DRUG SUPPLY CHAIN PANEL: INSURERS AND PLAN SPONSORS**

09:02:53 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
09:04:12 Matthew Weaver, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
09:05:02 Karlee Tebbutt, Regional Director, America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP)  
[EXHIBIT 1](#)  
09:09:02 Sen. Josh Kassmier left the meeting.

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

09:13:51 Rep. Brian Close  
09:13:59 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
09:14:00 Vice Presiding Officer Ellie Boldman  
09:14:34 Karlee Tebbutt, AHIP

**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 33 - RX DRUG SUPPLY CHAIN PANEL: INSURERS AND PLAN SPONSORS - Continued**

09:16:01 Nichole Artis, Pharmacy Director, Mountain Health Co-Op  
[EXHIBIT 2](#)  
09:25:43 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
09:25:56 Matthew Weaver, LSD  
09:26:12 David Dross, Pharmacy Consultant, Mercer  
[EXHIBIT 3](#)  
09:36:14 Sen. Mark Noland joined the meeting.  
09:42:30 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler

**Public Comment**

09:43:06 Jackie Boyle, Mountain Health Co-Op  
09:45:55 Tonia Sorrell-Neal, Pharmaceutical Care Management Association (PCMA)  
09:47:33 Amy Jenks, Administrator, State of Montana Benefit Plan  
09:48:06 Josh Morris, Independent Pharmacies Montana  
(See Exhibit 1)  
09:49:45 Mike Matovich, Pharmacy Owner  
[EXHIBIT 4](#)

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

09:54:24 Sen. Kenneth Bogner  
09:54:49 Karlee Tebbutt, AHIP  
09:56:49 Rep. Jamie Isaly  
(See Exhibit 1)  
09:57:32 Karlee Tebbutt, AHIP  
09:58:01 Rep. Jamie Isaly  
09:58:08 David Dross, Mercer  
10:01:03 Rep. Brian Close  
10:01:25 Karlee Tebbutt, AHIP  
10:01:59 Nichole Artis, Mountain Health Co-Op  
10:02:22 Jackie Boyle, Mountain Health Co-Op  
10:03:34 Rep. Brian Close  
10:03:43 David Dross, Mercer  
10:06:20 Sen. Kenneth Bogner  
10:06:40 David Dross, Mercer  
10:07:55 Sen. Mark Noland  
10:08:18 Tonia Sorrell-Neal, PCMA  
10:10:16 Vice Presiding Officer Ellie Boldman  
10:12:45 Jackie Boyle, Mountain Health Co-Op  
10:14:51 Sen. Kenneth Bogner left the meeting.  
10:16:33 Amy Jenks, State of Montana Benefit Plan  
10:19:13 David Dross, Mercer  
10:20:59 Karlee Tebbutt, AHIP  
10:25:41 Rep. Nelly Nicol  
10:26:14 Nichole Artis, Mountain Health Co-Op  
10:27:29 David Dross, Mercer  
10:36:19 Sen. Mark Noland  
10:39:07 Jackie Boyle, Mountain Health Co-Op  
(See Exhibit 2)  
10:44:12 Rep. Nelly Nicol  
10:44:44 David Dross, Mercer  
10:46:16 Sen. Mark Noland  
10:46:38 Tonia Sorrell-Neal, PCMA  
10:49:09 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
  
10:49:42 **Recessed**  
10:55:47 **Reconvened**

**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 33 - RX DRUG SUPPLY CHAIN PANEL: NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES (NCSL)**

10:55:48 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
10:56:24 Matthew Weaver, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
10:57:00 Colleen Becker, Health Program Project Manager, NCSL

**EXHIBIT 5**

**Public Comment**

11:24:35 Tonia Sorrell-Neal, Pharmaceutical Care Management Association (PCMA)  
**EXHIBIT 6**  
11:30:11 Drew Cziok, Government Relations Director, Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS)  
11:33:38 Bruce Spencer, Cigna Healthcare

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

11:37:32 Rep. Brian Close  
11:37:50 Colleen Becker, NCSL  
11:39:32 Rep. Nelly Nicol  
11:40:04 Colleen Becker, NCSL  
11:40:57 Sen. Mark Noland

**AGENCY OVERSIGHT: CANNABIS AND ALCOHOL REGULATION DIVISION (CARD) / DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE (DOR)**

11:41:08 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
11:43:32 Sen. Josh Kassmier joined the meeting  
11:43:39 Kristan Barbour, Administrator, CARD

**Public Comment**

11:46:55 Jennifer Hensley, Fidelity Diagnostic Laboratory  
11:48:35 Alex Sterhan, Administrator, Gambling Control Division

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

11:49:58 Rep. Jamie Isaly  
11:50:22 Kristan Barbour, CARD  
11:52:22 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler

**MEMBER TOPIC: INTOXICATING SUBSTANCES**

11:53:16 Matthew Weaver, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
11:53:50 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
11:54:36 Stacy Campbell, Administrator, Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS)  
11:55:30 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
11:55:42 Sen. Josh Kassmier left the meeting

11:56:24 Steven Crawford, Bureau Chief, Montana Narcotics Bureau, Department of Justice (DOJ)  
11:56:54 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
11:57:08 Kristan Barbour, Administrator, Cannabis and Alcohol Regulation Division (CARD), Department of Revenue (DOR)

**Public Comment**

11:58:10 Debra Pitassy, Montana Beer and Wine Distributors Association  
11:58:58 John Forte, Yellowstone County Health Officer, Riverstone Health  
12:02:14 Kate Cholewa, Montana Cannabis Industry Association  
12:03:55 Melissa Lewis, Molson Coors Beverage Company  
**EXHIBIT 7**  
12:04:38 Jennifer Hensley, Montana Academy of Physician Assistants  
12:06:04 EJ Redding  
12:07:54 Jay Yeager, Billings  
12:14:13 Beth Price Morrison, Certified Substance Abuse Specialist, Cascade County  
12:16:07 Susan Epper  
12:22:50 Wendy Chamberlain, Kratom Danger Awareness Incorporated Nonprofit  
12:30:29 Kelli McCann, Fairfield  
12:35:48 Susan Cave

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

12:42:07 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
12:42:27 Vice Presiding Officer Ellie Boldman  
12:42:28 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
12:42:34 Rep. Nelly Nicol  
EXHIBIT 8 – Physical Examples of Kratom Products Provided by John Forte, Yellowstone County Health Officer, Riverstone Health  
12:43:08 Vice Presiding Officer Ellie Boldman  
12:43:58 Steven Crawford, Montana Narcotics Bureau  
12:45:44 Kristan Barbour, CARD  
**EXHIBIT 9**  
12:52:12 Sen. Mark Noland  
12:52:27 Kristan Barbour, CARD  
12:53:16 Steven Crawford, Montana Narcotics Bureau  
12:55:21 Rep. Brian Close  
12:55:40 Steven Crawford, Montana Narcotics Bureau  
12:56:03 Sen. Kenneth Bogner joined the meeting  
12:56:56 John Forte, Yellowstone County Health Officer, Riverstone Health  
12:59:30 Rep. Morgan Thiel  
13:00:01 John Forte, Yellowstone County Health Officer, Riverstone Health

13:00:26 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
13:00:47 Steven Crawford, Montana Narcotics Bureau  
13:01:22 Sen. Mark Noland  
13:03:27 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
  
13:04:09 **Recessed**  
14:14:00 **Reconvened**

#### **HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 52 - MONTANA CATTLE INDUSTRY**

14:14:00 Sen. Josh Kassmier did not return from recess.  
14:14:01 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
14:14:12 Matthew Weaver, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
[EXHIBIT 10](#)  
14:15:29 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
14:15:50 Mike Honeycutt, Executive Officer, Department of Livestock  
14:20:19 Sen. Kenneth Bogner joined the meeting.  
14:26:03 Rep. Nelly Nicol joined the meeting  
14:31:40 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
14:32:24 Chaley Harney, Executive Director, Montana Beef Council  
[EXHIBIT 11](#)  
14:45:35 Matthew Weaver, LSD  
14:45:48 Chaley Harney, Montana Beef Council  
(See Exhibit 11)  
14:52:26 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
14:52:42 Liz Edmundson, Montana Pulse Crop Committee  
[EXHIBIT 12](#)

#### **Public Comment**

15:01:55 John Grande, Grande Ranch Co.  
15:05:52 Karli Johnson, Montana Farm Bureau Federation  
15:07:04 Rachel Prevost, Montana Farmers Union  
15:10:39 Taylor Brown

#### **Committee Questions / Discussion**

15:14:04 Sen. Kenneth Bogner  
15:14:37 Mike Honeycutt, Department of Livestock  
15:17:14 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
15:17:51 Rep. Peter Strand  
15:18:37 Chaley Harney, Montana Beef Council  
15:21:52 Sen. Kenneth Bogner left the meeting.  
15:23:56 Rep. Jamie Isaly

15:24:33 Chaley Harney, Montana Beef Council  
15:26:45 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
15:27:19 Chaley Harney, Montana Beef Council

### **SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 11 - FARMERS MARKETS**

15:27:27 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
15:28:20 Matthew Weaver, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
EXHIBIT 13  
15:29:26 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
15:29:44 Peter Strauss, Helena Farmers' Markets  
15:37:46 Rachel Prevost, Grow Montana  
15:42:29 Sadie Overlie, Lead Sanitarian, Environmental and Food Safety Section, Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS)

### **Public Comment**

15:42:52 None

### **Committee Questions / Discussion**

15:43:21 Rep. Brian Close  
15:43:41 Sadie Overlie, DPHHS  
15:44:18 Peter Strauss, Helena Farmers' Markets

### **PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY TOPIC UNDER THE COMMITTEE'S JURISDICTION BUT NOT THE AGENDA**

15:46:24 Bella Folino, Montana Farmers Union

### **WORK SESSION: COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND MEETING WRAP UP**

15:46:43 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
15:47:02 Matthew Weaver, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
15:47:20 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
15:47:32 Vice Presiding Officer Ellie Boldman  
15:49:54 Sen. Mark Noland and Sen. Kenneth Bogner joined the meeting.  
15:49:49 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
15:51:46 Sen. Mark Noland

### **Motion**

15:53:00 Sen. Mark Noland moved to reinstate the January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026, meeting for the Economic Affairs Interim Committee.

### **Discussion on the Motion**

15:53:09 Rep. Brian Close  
15:53:13 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler

15:53:31 Sen. Kenneth Bogner

**Vote**

15:53:44 Carried unanimously by voice vote.  
Rep. Ed Buttrey vote 'yes' by proxy.

**WORK SESSION: COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND MEETING WRAP UP - Continued**

15:54:24 Matthew Weaver, LSD  
15:54:38 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
15:55:28 Vice Presiding Officer Ellie Boldman  
15:55:48 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
15:56:07 Sen. Mark Noland  
15:57:30 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
15:58:00 Rep. Brian Close  
16:00:09 Rep. Morgan Thiel  
16:00:28 Vice Presiding Officer Ellie Boldman  
16:00:52 Rep. Nelly Nicol  
16:02:03 Rep. Jamie Isaly  
16:14:10 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler

**Motion**

16:18:45 Rep. Mark Noland moved to consider studying one agency within the Montana State Fund to see if the state is receiving a fair deal.

**Discussion on the Motion**

16:19:40 Vice Presiding Officer Ellie Boldman  
16:19:43 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
16:19:45 Rep. Brian Close

**Vote**

16:19:53 Failed 4 – 6 with Presiding Officer Brandon Ler, Sen. Kenneth Bogner, Rep. Nelly Nicole, and Sen. Mark Noland voting 'yes'.  
Rep. Ed Buttrey voting 'no' by proxy

**WORK SESSION: COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND MEETING WRAP UP - Continued**

16:20:58 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
16:21:20 Rep. Brian Close  
16:22:04 Rep. Jamie Isaly  
16:22:09 Rep. Nelly Nicol left the meeting.  
16:22:18 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
16:22:28 Matthew Weaver, LSD  
16:22:51 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
16:22:58 Sen. Kenneth Bogner

16:23:20 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler  
16:23:46 Jameson Walker, Legal Staff, LSD  
16:24:17 Presiding Officer Brandon Ler

**IN RECESS UNTIL NOVEMBER 13, 2025**

Adjournment: 16:24:24