



ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY INTERIM COMMITTEE

69th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

Gregg Hunter
Gayle Lammers
Christopher Pope
Daniel Zolnikov

HOUSE MEMBERS

Bob Carter
Becky Edwards
Gary Parry
Kerri Seekins-Crowe
Katie Zolnikov

COMMITTEE STAFF

Griffin Burns – Lead Staff
Jacelyn Sterling - Secretary
Jameson Walker – Legal Staff

MINUTES LOG

July 28, 2025
Room 137 and Zoom
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.

Access to an electronic copy of these minutes and the audio or video recording is provided from the Legislative Branch home page at <https://leg.mt.gov>. From the home page, select the "Committees" drop down menu at the top, then select Administrative or Interim, and the appropriate committee. The written minutes log can be located by expanding the accordion menu for the date of the meeting. Links to the audio/video files can be located by selecting the Video/Audio button on the same page, then the "past/current recordings" button. From there, use the calendar to select the date of the meeting you wish to view/listen to. The written Minutes Log, along with links to the audio and video recordings, is listed by meeting date on the interim committee's web page. Each of the Exhibits is linked and can be viewed by clicking on the Exhibit of interest. All Exhibits are public information and may be printed. Please contact the Legislative Services Division at 406-444-3064 for more information.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sen. Daniel Zolnikov (R)
Rep. Becky Edwards (D)
Rep. Bob Carter (D)
Sen. Gregg Hunter (R)
Sen. Gayle Lammers (R)
Rep. Gary Parry (R)
Sen. Christopher Pope (D)
Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe (R)
Rep. Katie Zolnikov (R)

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

None

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF PRESENT:

Griffin Burns, Lead Staff
Jacelyn Sterling, Secretary
Jameson Walker, Legal Staff

AGENDA ([Attachment 1](#))

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

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

09:01:03 Acting Presiding Officer Christopher Pope called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM. The committee secretary took roll.

INTRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND STAFF

09:01:48 Acting Presiding Officer Christopher Pope
09:03:58 Sen. Daniel Zolnikov
09:04:55 Sen. Gregg Hunter
09:05:29 Sen. Gayle Lammers
09:06:15 Rep. Gary Parry
09:07:37 Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe
09:08:42 Rep. Katie Zolnikov
09:09:59 Rep. Bob Carter
09:10:56 Rep. Becky Edwards
09:11:53 Acting Presiding Officer Christopher Pope
09:12:01 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
09:12:44 Jameson Walker, Legal Staff, LSD
09:13:12 Jacelyn Sterling, Secretary, LSD
09:13:56 Rep. Gary Parry
09:14:10 Griffin Burns, LSD
09:14:24 Acting Presiding Officer Christopher Pope

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

09:14:37 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
09:17:35 Jameson Walker, Legal Staff, LSD
09:18:15 Griffin Burns, LSD

[EXHIBIT 1](#)

Committee Questions/Discussion

09:20:40 Rep. Gary Parry
09:20:55 Griffin Burns

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS - Continued

SB 64 Overview

Angie Carter, Financial Director, LSD

[EXHIBIT 2](#)

Committee Questions/Discussion

09:27:26 Rep. Gary Parry
09:27:32 Angie Carter, LSD
09:27:48 Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe
09:27:58 Angie Carter

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS - Continued

09:28:22 Griffin Burns
(See Exhibit 1)
09:29:18 Acting Presiding Officer Christopher Pope
09:29:41 Griffin Burns
09:30:03 Acting Presiding Officer Christopher Pope
09:30:36 Griffin Burns
09:30:58 Rep. Gary Parry

Motion

09:30:58 Rep. Gary Parry moved to approve the use of written proxy votes for the 2025-26 interim.

Vote

09:31:15 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

ELECTION OF THE ETIC PRESIDING OFFICER AND VICE-PRESIDING OFFICER

09:31:23 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
09:31:34 Acting Presiding Officer Christopher Pope

Motion

09:32:30 Rep. Bob Carter nominated Sen. Daniel Zolnikov as Presiding Officer of ETIC.

Discussion on the Motion

09:32:40 Sen. Gary Parry
09:32:58 Sen. Daniel Zolnikov

Vote

09:33:41 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

Motion

09:34:04 Sen. Daniel Zolnikov nominated Rep. Bob Carter as Vice Presiding Officer.

Motion

09:34:25 Rep. Bob Carter declined the nomination and nominated Rep. Becky Edwards as Vice Presiding Officer.
09:34:41 Sen. Daniel Zolnikov withdrew his nomination for Rep. Carter.

Vote

09:35:04 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

Committee Questions/Discussion

09:35:13 Rep. Becky Edwards
09:35:24 Acting Presiding Officer Christopher Pope

09:35:24 **Recessed**
09:47:38 **Reconvened**

General Committee Discussion

09:47:55 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

NATURAL RESOURCES LEGISLATION SUMMARY

09:54:11 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 3](#)

Committee Questions/Discussion

09:58:29 Rep. Gary Parry
09:58:45 Griffin Burns, LSD
10:00:44 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

Public Comment

10:02:43 None

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF INTERIM WORK PLAN OPTIONS

10:03:10 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 4](#)

Public Comment

10:13:10 Kelly Lynch, Executive Director, Montana League of City and Towns
10:15:19 Mark Lambrecht, CEO, Montana Electric Cooperatives Association (MECA)
10:16:35 Kyle Unruh, Renewable Northwest
10:19:31 David Herbst, American Power Play
10:20:06 Derek Goldman, Montana Policy Associate, Northwest Energy Coalition

[EXHIBIT 5](#)

Committee Questions/Discussion

10:23:41 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
10:27:27 Mark Lambrecht, MECA
10:27:38 Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe
10:28:24 Mark Lambrecht
10:29:14 Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe
10:29:21 Sen. Christopher Pope
10:32:40 Kyle Unruh, Renewable Northwest
10:33:27 Rep. Gary Parry
10:33:51 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
10:33:55 Sen. Gayle Lammers
10:35:03 Kyle Unruh
10:36:36 Sen. Gayle Lammers
10:36:56 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
10:39:26 Kyle Unruh
10:40:25 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
10:40:47 Rep. Bob Carter
10:41:14 Kyle Unruh

INTRODUCTION TO ASSIGNED STUDIES House Joint Resolution 4, Senate Joint Resolution 12, & Senate Joint Resolution 21

10:43:38 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

[EXHIBIT 6](#)

[EXHIBIT 7](#)

[EXHIBIT 8](#)

[EXHIBIT 9](#)

Committee Questions/Discussion

10:50:44 Sen. Christopher Pope
10:51:18 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
10:51:30 Rep. Gary Parry
10:52:28 Griffin Burns, LSD
10:53:09 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
10:53:25 Rep. Gary Parry
10:53:42 Griffin Burns
10:54:05 Rep. Gary Parry
10:54:21 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

Public Comment

10:54:47 David Hurst, American Power Play
10:55:35 Kyle Unruh, Renewable Northwest
10:56:40 Mekenna Sellers, Montana Renewable Energy Association
10:58:31 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
10:58:58 Shannon James, Montana Environmental Information Center
10:59:43 Ron Catlett, Flathead Electric Cooperative
11:01:21 Derek Goldman, Northwest Energy Coalition

Committee Questions/Discussion

11:02:20 Sen. Greg Hunter
11:02:34 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
11:02:42 Griffin Burns
11:03:19 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
11:04:38 Rep. Katie Zolnikov
11:05:04 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

ADMINISTRATIVE RULE REVIEW

11:06:51 Jameson Walker, Legal Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 10](#)

Committee Questions/Discussion

11:18:14 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
11:21:54 Jameson Walker, LSD

Public Comment

11:22:27 None

Committee Questions/Discussion

11:22:45 Sen. Daniel Zolnikov
[EXHIBIT 11](#)
11:27:03 Rep. Gary Parry
11:27:12 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, LSD
11:27:26 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

11:27:31 **Recessed**

13:05:40 **Reconvened**

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OVERVIEW

13:06:05 Jennifer Fielder, Vice President, Commissioner, Public Service Commission (PSC)
13:10:16 Will Rosquist, Administrator, Regulatory Division, PSC

[EXHIBIT 12](#)

13:23:12 Lucas Hamilton, Chief Legal Counsel, PSC,

[EXHIBIT 13](#)

13:26:01 Brad Molnar, President, Commissioner, PSC

[EXHIBIT 14](#)

Committee Questions/Discussion

13:35:09 None

Public Comment

13:35:46 Alan Olson, Government Affairs Director, Northwestern Energy

Committee Questions/Discussion

13:37:26 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

13:37:53 Alan Olson, Northwestern Energy

MONTANA ENERGY INFORMATION & INTRODUCTIONS

Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

13:38:51 Sonja Nowakowski, Director, DEQ

13:42:25 Dan Walsh, Administrator, Air Energy and Mining Division, DEQ

Committee Questions/Discussion

13:45:25 Rep. Bob Carter

13:45:35 Dan Walsh, DEQ

13:45:50 Ben Brouwer, Energy Bureau Chief, DEQ

13:45:59 Rep. Bob Carter

13:46:09 Ben Brouwer, DEQ

13:47:35 Sen. Christopher Pope

13:49:09 Director Sonja Nowakowski

13:49:17 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

MONTANA ENERGY INFORMATION & INTRODUCTIONS

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

13:50:39 Kate Wilson, Montana Liaison, BPA, Federal Lands Liaison

Committee Questions/Discussion

13:53:53 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

13:55:57 Kate Wilson, BPA

MONTANA ENERGY INFORMATION & INTRODUCTIONS

Montanan Consumer Counsel (MCC)

13:56:38 Jason Brown, MCC

Committee Questions/Discussion

13:58:59 Rep. Gary Parry
13:59:12 Jason Brown
13:59:33 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
13:59:55 Rep. Bob Carter
14:00:19 Jason Brown
14:00:57 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

MONTANA ENERGY INFORMATION & INTRODUCTIONS**Northwest Power & Conservation Council**

14:01:31 Brian Dekiep, Senior Policy Energy Analyst, Northwest Power & Conservation Council

Committee Questions/Discussion

14:04:05 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
14:07:29 Brian Dekiep, Northwest Power & Conservation Council
14:08:43 Rep. Gary Parry
14:10:37 Brian Dekiep
14:11:48 Sen. Christopher Pope
14:14:44 Brian Dekiep
14:15:30 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

Public Comment

14:16:05 Mark Lambrecht, CEO, Montana Electric Cooperatives Association
14:19:20 Jesse Luther, Partner, Taylor Luther Group; on behalf of Talen Energy Montana; on Behalf of Jason Small, AFL-CIO; on behalf of Sabey Data Centers
[EXHIBIT 15](#)
14:27:52 Amy Grmoljez, Crowley Fleck Law Firm, Avista Core
14:29:03 Sonny Capece, Montana Petroleum Association
14:30:50 Charles Denowh, Partner, Montana Group
14:31:35 Melissa Lewis, Puget Sound Energy, Charter Communications
14:32:42 Shelby Demars, Montana Association of Oil, Gas and Coal Counties
14:34:10 Shannon James, Montana Environmental Information Center
14:34:47 Matt Vincent, Executive Director, Montana Mining Association
14:36:10 Alan Olson, Government Affairs Director, Northwest Energy Coalition
14:37:00 Ron Catlett, Flathead Electric Cooperative

Committee Questions/Discussion

14:39:48 None

14:40:29 **Recessed**
15:04:57 **Reconvened**

COMMITTEE WORK SESSION

15:05:00 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:08:46 Sen. Greg Hunter
15:08:54 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:09:52 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
 [EXHIBIT 16](#)
15:10:00 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:10:51 Vice Presiding Officer Becky Edwards
15:12:05 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:12:15 Sen. Gregg Hunter
15:13:11 Sen. Christopher Pope
15:14:16 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:14:35 Rep. Gary Parry
15:16:02 Rep. Katie Zolnikov
15:16:48 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:18:11 Griffin Burns, LSD
15:19:01 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:19:13 Sen. Gregg Hunter
15:19:55 Rep. Gary Parry
15:20:36 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:20:48 Rep. Bob Carter
15:21:28 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:23:07 Griffin Burns
15:23:57 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:24:21 Sen. Christopher Pope
15:24:31 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:25:20 Rep. Gary Parry
15:25:33 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:26:55 Rep. Katie Zolnikov
15:27:23 Griffin Burns
15:27:50 Sen. Christopher Pope
15:29:12 Rep. Gary Parry
15:31:29 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:31:55 Sen. Christopher Pope
15:36:02 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:36:17 Griffin Burns
15:36:49 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

15:38:11 Rep. Gary Parry
15:38:42 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:40:16 Griffin Burns
15:41:13 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:41:49 Sen. Christopher Pope
15:42:08 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:42:18 Rep. Katie Zolnikov
15:42:49 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:44:14 Griffin Burns
15:45:38 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:46:38 Sen. Gregg Hunter
15:49:33 Griffin Burns
15:50:54 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
15:51:05 Griffin Burns
15:51:26 Jameson Walker, Legal Staff, LSD
15:52:00 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

COMMITTEE BILL DRAFT PROPOSALS AND DISCUSSION

15:53:13 Discussion

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF ETIC

16:13:05 None

Committee Questions/Discussion

16:13:41 Jameson Walker, Legal Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
16:15:19 Rep. Gary Parry
16:15:34 Jameson Walker, LSD
16:16:11 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 16:16:35