



STATE ADMINISTRATION AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS INTERIM COMMITTEE

69th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

Mike Cuffe
Theresa Manzella
Wendy McKamey
Jacinda Morigeau

HOUSE MEMBERS

Kelly Kortum
Marc Lee
Kathy Love
Mark Reinschmidt
Lukas Schubert
Peter Strand
Eric Tilleman

COMMITTEE STAFF

Rebecca Power - Lead Staff
Andria Hardin - Legal Staff
Ania Alduenda - Secretary

MINUTES LOG

January 12, 2026
Capitol Room 102 & 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. Theresa Manzella, Presiding Officer (R)
Rep. Marc Lee, Vice Presiding Officer (D)
Sen. Mike Cuffe (R)
Rep. Kelly Kortum (D)
Rep. Kathy Love (R)
Sen. Wendy McKamey (R)
Sen. Jacinda Morigeau (D)
Rep. Mark Reinschmidt (R)
Rep. Lukas Schubert (R)
Rep. Peter Strand (D)
Rep. Eric Tilleman (R)

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT:

Rebecca Power, Lead Staff
Andria Hardin, Legal Staff
Ania Alduenda, Secretary

AGENDA ([Attachment 1](#))

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

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

09:02:14 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM. The committee secretary took roll.

Meeting Overview

09:02:59 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
09:04:06 Rebecca Power, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

PENSION OVERSIGHT

Board of Investments (BOI) Biannual Report

09:05:11 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
09:05:38 Dan Villa, Executive Director, BOI
[EXHIBIT 1](#)

Committee Discussion / Questions

09:24:39 Vice Presiding Officer Marc Lee
09:24:59 Dir. Dan Villa, BOI
09:28:03 Sen. Mike Cuffe
09:28:24 Dir. Dan Villa, BOI
09:30:17 Sen. Jacinda Morigeau
09:30:40 Dir. Dan Villa, BOI
09:32:24 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
09:33:10 Dir. Dan Villa, BOI

BOI Investment Practices and House Bill 228 (2023) Implementation

09:33:28 Dir. Dan Villa, BOI
[EXHIBIT 2](#)

Committee Discussion / Questions

09:43:02 Rep. Lukas Schubert
09:43:31 Dir. Dan Villa, BOI
09:45:17 Rep. Kelly Kortum
09:45:37 Dir. Dan Villa, BOI
09:48:16 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
09:48:29 Dir. Dan Villa, BOI
09:54:24 Rep. Lukas Schubert

09:54:54 Dir. Dan Villa, BOI
09:57:19 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
[EXHIBIT 3](#)

ADMINISTRATIVE RULE REVIEW
Overview of January Rule Review Memo

09:58:24 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
09:58:40 Andria Hardin, Legal Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 4](#)

Committee Discussion / Questions

10:01:41 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
10:02:01 Andria Hardin, LSD
10:02:22 Sen. Jacinda Morigeau
10:02:37 Rebecca Power, Lead Staff, LSD
10:02:45 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella

COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE IDEA TRACKER

10:03:24 Rebecca Power, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 5](#)
10:04:24 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella

Committee Discussion / Questions

10:06:50 Sen. Jacinda Morigeau
10:07:22 Rebecca Power, LSD
10:08:06 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
[EXHIBIT 6](#)

10:10:18 **Recessed**
10:36:08 **Reconvened**

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY TOPIC UNDER SAVA JURISDICTION

Written Public Comments ([Attachment 3](#))

10:36:09 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
10:37:08 Dave Kesler, Phillipsburg Resident
[EXHIBIT 7](#)
10:42:49 Loy Chvilicek, Helena Resident
[EXHIBIT 8](#)
10:46:22 Duane Cunningham, American Legion of Montana
10:52:19 Colleen Hinds, Heron Resident
10:54:18 Margaret Schmidt, Missoula Resident

Committee Discussion / Questions

10:56:51 Rep. Kelly Kortum
10:57:22 Duane Cunningham, American Legion of Montana

11:02:10 Sen. Mike Cuffe
11:02:22 Duane Cunningham, American Legion of Montana
11:05:50 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
11:06:46 Duane Cunningham, American Legion of Montana
11:07:17 Rep. Kelly Kortum
11:07:31 Sen. Jacinda Morigeau
11:07:46 Andria Hardin, Legal Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
11:07:51 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
11:08:09 Rep. Kathy Love
11:08:19 Dave Kessler, Phillipsburg Resident
11:08:49 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
11:09:16 Dave Kessler, Phillipsburg Resident
11:11:00 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
11:11:23 Roger Hagan, National Vice Chair, Legislative Commission, American Legion & Vice Chair, Board of Veterans' Affairs, Veterans' Affairs Division, Department of Military Affairs (DMA)
11:16:47 Sen. Mike Cuffe
11:17:19 Rep. Mark Reinschmidt
11:17:35 Roger Hagan, DMA
11:18:49 Sen. Jacinda Morigeau
11:20:03 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella

Motion

11:21:07 Rep. Kelly Kortum moved to direct staff to write a letter to the Veterans' Affairs Department for comments on these issues at an upcoming meeting.

Discussion on the Motion

11:21:27 Rebecca Power, Lead Staff, LSD
11:21:40 Rep. Kelly Kortum
11:21:49 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
11:22:11 Sen. Mike Cuffe
11:23:00 Rep. Eric Tilleman
11:23:19 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
11:23:41 Sen. Mike Cuffe
11:23:50 Rep. Lukas Schubert
11:24:16 Rebecca Power, LSD
11:24:53 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
11:25:19 Rep. Kelly Kortum withdrew his motion.

Motion

- 11:25:31 Rep. Lukas Schubert moved to direct staff to draft a letter to Brigadier General Trenton Gibson to investigate the claims made against an employee of the Veterans Affairs Hospital of Helena and report back to the committee on next steps.
- 11:25:42 Rebecca Power, LSD

Vote

- 11:26:21 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE IDEA TRACKER - Continued

- 11:26:53 Rebecca Power, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
(See Exhibit 5)

Committee Discussion / Questions

- 11:27:29 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
- 11:28:07 Rep. Kelly Kortum
- 11:28:27 Rebecca Power, LSD
- 11:28:56 Sen. Jacinda Morigeau
- 11:29:27 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
- 11:30:14 Sen. Mike Cuffe
- 11:30:45 Rep. Mark Reinschmidt
- 11:31:04 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
- 11:32:26 **Recessed**
- 12:31:16 **Reconvened**

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 48: STUDY OF MOVING THE PRIMARY ELECTION**Panel Discussion – School Election & School Funding Schedules**

- 12:31:18 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
- 12:32:14 Katie Bloodgood, Deputy Chief of Staff and Policy Director, Office of Public Instruction (OPI)
- 12:35:59 Shay Baize, Training and Interim Services, Montana Association of School Business Officials (MASBO)
- 12:40:21 Lance Melton, Executive Director, Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA)
[EXHIBIT 9](#)
- 12:41:24 Eric Semerad, Election Administrator, Gallatin County

Committee Discussion / Questions

- 12:43:39 Rep. Lukas Schubert
- 12:44:38 Andrea Mohammadi, School Finance Business Analyst, OPI
- 12:46:33 Nicole Thuotte, Unit Manager, Education Data Collection Team, OPI
- 12:49:34 Rep. Peter Strand
- 12:50:30 Lance Melton, MTSBA
- 12:53:12 Sen. Mike Cuffe

Committee Discussion / Questions - Continued

12:53:42 Lance Melton, MTSBA
12:56:52 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
12:57:03 Rebecca Power, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 10](#)
[EXHIBIT 11](#)
[EXHIBIT 12](#)
12:57:46 Sen. Mike Cuffe
12:59:08 Rep. Mark Reinschmidt
12:59:33 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
12:59:43 Eric Semerad, Gallatin County
13:02:45 Sen. Mike Cuffe
13:03:21 Eric Semerad, Gallatin County
13:05:01 Rep. Lukas Schubert
13:05:16 Lance Melton, MTSBA
13:08:08 Andrea Mohammadi, OPI
13:10:11 Rep. Kathy Love
13:10:28 Eric Semerad, Gallatin County
13:16:22 Rebecca Power, LSD
13:16:45 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
13:16:51 Eric Semerad, Gallatin County
13:17:14 Rep. Eric Tilleman
13:17:29 Shay Baize, MASBO
13:20:58 Lance Melton, MTSBA
13:22:17 Rep. Lukas Schubert
13:22:58 Lance Melton, MTSBA
13:24:19 Shay Baize, MASBO
13:25:49 Sen. Mike Cuffe
13:27:07 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
13:27:44 Rebecca Power, LSD
13:28:45 Rep. Lukas Schubert
13:29:01 Andrea Mohammadi, OPI
13:29:18 Rep. Eric Tilleman
13:29:48 Sen. Mike Cuffe
13:30:06 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
13:31:49 Rep. Kathy Love
13:32:14 Eric Semerad, Gallatin County
13:37:24 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
13:38:18 Rebecca Power, LSD
[EXHIBIT 13](#)
13:41:08 Rep. Kelly Kortum

13:41:38 Rebecca Power, LSD
(See Exhibit 12)
13:45:14 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
13:46:11 Rep. Eric Tilleman
[EXHIBIT 14](#)
13:46:57 Rep. Mark Reinschmidt
13:47:26 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
13:47:49 Rebecca Power, LSD
(See Exhibit 14)
13:52:02 Rep. Kathy Love
13:52:43 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
13:52:56 Rep. Lukas Schubert
13:53:04 Rebecca Power, LSD
(See Exhibit 14)

Public Comment

13:54:31 Toni Kramer, Election Administrator, Lake County
[EXHIBIT 15](#)
13:56:07 Rebecca Power, LSD
[EXHIBIT 16](#)
[EXHIBIT 17](#)

Committee Work Session on the House Joint Resolution 48 Study

13:56:37 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
13:57:21 Rep. Lukas Schubert

Motion

13:57:41 Rep. Lukas Schubert moved to decide whether or not to continue the House Joint Resolution 48 study at the next committee meeting.

Vote

13:58:38 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

13:59:25 **Recessed**

14:15:20 **Reconvened**

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 35: STUDY OF VOTER LIST MAINTENANCE AND INTEGRITY

Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Update & Presidential Executive Order Regarding Elections

14:15:21 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
14:15:54 Austin James, Elections Director, Office of the Secretary of State (SOS)

Committee Discussion / Questions

14:28:53 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
14:29:04 Dir. Austin James, SOS
14:29:24 Sen. Jacinda Morigeau

14:29:36 Dir. Austin James, SOS
14:29:52 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
14:30:13 Dir. Austin James, SOS
14:31:00 Rep. Kelly Kortum
14:31:27 Dir. Austin James, SOS
14:33:00 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
14:33:31 Sen. Mike Cuffe
14:33:56 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
[EXHIBIT 18](#)
(See Exhibit 8)
14:36:20 Dir. Austin James, SOS

Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) Voters

14:37:16 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
14:38:16 Rebecca Power, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 19](#)
[EXHIBIT 20](#)
[EXHIBIT 21](#)
[EXHIBIT 22](#)
EXHIBIT 23
Note: Exhibit 23 is a video presentation that may be viewed at 14:39:15 in the [video recording of the meeting](#).
14:40:06 Sen. Wendy McKamey left the meeting.

Committee Discussion / Questions

15:08:41 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
15:12:49 Rebecca Power, LSD
(See Exhibit 19)
15:13:52 Sen. Mike Cuffe
15:14:50 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
(See Exhibit 22)
15:16:22 Eric Semerad, Election Administrator, Gallatin County
15:18:24 Toni Kramer, Election Administrator, Lake County
15:24:30 Vice Presiding Officer Marc Lee
15:25:11 Eric Semerad, Gallatin County
15:25:47 Toni Kramer, Lake County
15:26:47 Sen. Jacinda Morigeau
(See Exhibit 22)
15:27:43 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
15:28:29 Eric Semerad, Gallatin County
15:28:45 Rep. Peter Strand
15:29:28 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
15:29:52 Sen. Mike Cuffe
15:30:36 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella

15:31:21 Eric Semerad, Gallatin County
15:33:29 Sen. Mike Cuffe
15:33:39 Toni Kramer, Lake County
15:34:18 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
15:34:33 Rebecca Power, LSD
15:35:18 Eric Semerad, Gallatin County
15:35:49 Sen. Jacinda Morigeau
(See Exhibit 22)
15:36:17 Toni Kramer, Lake County
15:36:53 Eric Semerad, Gallatin County
15:37:56 Rep. Eric Tilleman
15:38:17 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
15:39:17 Vice Presiding Officer Marc Lee
15:40:16 Rep. Lukas Schubert
15:41:13 Rep. Peter Strand
15:41:47 Sen. Mike Cuffe
15:42:38 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella

Voters of Unsound Mind

15:43:15 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
15:43:25 Andria Hardin, Legal Staff, LSD
[EXHIBIT 24](#)

Committee Discussion / Questions

16:00:27 Sen. Mike Cuffe
16:00:59 Andria Hardin, LSD
16:04:23 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
16:05:11 Rep. Kelly Kortum
16:05:37 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
16:07:06 Rep. Peter Strand
16:07:57 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
16:08:08 Andria Hardin, LSD
(See Exhibit 24)
16:11:03 Rep. Eric Tilleman
16:11:14 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella

Follow-up on Committee Research Requests

16:11:52 Rebecca Power, LSD
[EXHIBIT 25](#)
16:18:36 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella

Public Comment

16:19:12 Mary Beveridge
[EXHIBIT 26](#)

16:19:36 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
16:25:54 Gina Reilly
16:28:52 Lisa Bennett, Carbon County Resident
(See Attachment 3)

Committee Work Session

16:39:24 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
16:39:45 Rebecca Power, LSD
[EXHIBIT 27](#)
16:42:17 Rep. Eric Tilleman

MEETING WRAP UP

16:46:46 Presiding Officer Theresa Manzella
16:47:00 Rebecca Power, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 28](#)

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 16:48:44