



## STATE TRIBAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

### 69th Montana Legislature

#### SENATE MEMBERS

Josh Kassmier  
Gayle Lammers  
Susan Webber  
Jonathan Windy Boy

#### HOUSE MEMBERS

Lyn Bennett  
Shelly Fyant  
Terry Nelson  
Tyson Running Wolf  
Curtis Schomer  
Jade Sooktis

#### COMMITTEE STAFF

Maddelyn Black - Secretary  
Maddie Krezowski – Legal Staff  
Dr. Casey Pallister - Lead Staff

# MINUTES LOG

August 25, 2025

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:

Sen. Gayle Lammers, Vice Presiding Officer (R)  
Rep. Lyn Bennett (R)  
Rep. Shelly Fyant (D)  
Sen. Josh Kassmier (R)  
Rep. Terry Nelson (R)  
Rep. Curtis Schomer (R)  
Rep. Jade Sooktis (D)  
Sen. Susan Webber (D)  
Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy (D)

#### MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Rep. Tyson Running Wolf, Presiding Officer (D)

#### MEMBERS ABSENT:

#### STAFF PRESENT:

Dr. Casey Pallister, Lead Staff  
Maddie Krezowski, Legal Staff  
Maddelyn Black, Secretary

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

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

### **CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

09:00:15 Acting Presiding Officer Susan Webber called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.  
The committee secretary took roll.

### **Opening Prayer and Welcome**

09:01:53 Acting Presiding Officer Susan Webber

### **Committee and Staff Introductions**

09:02:30 Acting Presiding Officer Susan Webber  
09:06:23 Maddie Krezowski, Legal Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
09:06:37 Maddelyn Black, Secretary, LSD  
09:06:48 Dr. Casey Pallister, Lead Staff, LSD  
09:07:13 Acting Presiding Officer Susan Webber  
09:07:48 Rep. Terry Nelson  
09:08:16 Rep. Shelly Fyant  
09:08:38 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy  
09:09:22 Rep. Lyn Bennett  
09:09:57 Rep. Curtis Schomer  
09:10:10 Sen. Josh Kassmier  
09:10:26 Sen. Gayle Lammers  
09:11:06 Rep. Jade Sooktis  
09:11:19 Acting Presiding Officer Susan Webber

### **COMMITTEE OVERVIEW AND ADMINISTRATION**

09:11:51 Dr. Casey Pallister, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
[EXHIBIT 1](#)  
[EXHIBIT 2](#)

### **Committee Questions / Discussion**

09:21:24 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy  
09:21:33 Acting Presiding Officer Susan Webber

### **COMMITTEE OVERVIEW AND ADMINISTRATION - Continued**

09:21:57 Dr. Casey Pallister, LSD  
[EXHIBIT 3](#)  
09:23:00 Maia Zelenak, Senior Accountant, LSD

### **Committee Questions / Discussion**

09:28:05 Acting Presiding Officer Susan Webber  
09:28:08 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy

09:28:16 Maia Zelenak, LSD  
09:28:21 Acting Presiding Officer Susan Webber  
09:28:26 Maia Zelenak

#### **COMMITTEE OVERVIEW AND ADMINISTRATION - Continued**

09:29:02 Acting Presiding Officer Susan Webber  
09:29:09 Dr. Casey Pallister

#### **Motion**

09:29:52 Acting Presiding Officer Susan Webber moved to adopt the Rules, Procedures, and Guidelines for Interim Committees for the 2025 – 2026 interim.

#### **Vote**

09:29:56 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

#### **ELECTION OF STRC PRESIDING OFFICER AND VICE PRESIDING OFFICER**

09:30:05 Acting Presiding Officer Susan Webber

#### **Motion**

09:30:21 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy moved for Rep. Tyson Running Wolf to be the Presiding Officer for the State Tribal Relations Committee for the 2025 - 2026 interim.

#### **Motion**

09:30:34 Rep. Lyn Bennett moved for Rep. Tyson Running Wolf to be the Presiding Officer for the State Tribal Relations Committee for the 2025 - 2026 interim.

#### **Vote**

09:30:45 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

#### **ELECTION OF STRC PRESIDING OFFICER AND VICE PRESIDING OFFICER - Continued**

09:30:54 Acting Chair Susan Webber

#### **Motion**

09:31:08 Sen. Josh Kassmier moved for Sen. Gayle Lammers to be the Vice Presiding Officer for the State Tribal Relations Committee for the 2025 - 2026 interim.

#### **Vote**

09:31:17 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

#### **Discussion on the Vote**

09:32:11 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers assumed the position of Presiding Officer due to Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf being excused.

09:32:33 Dr. Casey Pallister, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

09:34:55 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers

09:35:26      **Recessed**  
10:15:31      **Reconvened**

**Public Comment**

10:15:40      None

**TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY & POLITICAL CLASSIFICATION: THE LEGAL POWER OF TREATIES**

10:16:01      Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
10:16:17      Dr. Patrick Lozar, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Native American Studies,  
University of Montana  
[EXHIBIT 4](#)  
10:35:33      Kristina Lucero, Director, American Indian Governance & Policy Institute,  
University of Montana  
(See Exhibit 4)

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

10:50:18      Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
10:50:33      Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy  
10:54:28      Sen. Susan Webber  
10:55:43      Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
10:55:56      Director Kristina Lucero, American Indian Governance & Policy Institute

**UPDATE ON PUBLIC LAW 280 AND THE FLATHEAD RESERVATION**

11:05:15      Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
11:05:41      Melissa Schlichting, Attorney, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes  
[EXHIBIT 5](#)  
11:14:43      Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers

**Public Comment**

11:14:59      David Larson, Remote Meeting Coordinator, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
11:15:07      Jade Bahr, Montana Budget & Policy Center  
[EXHIBIT 6](#)  
11:19:37      Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
11:20:17      David Larson, LSD

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

11:20:31      Sen. Susan Webber  
11:21:09      Melissa Schlichting, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes  
11:29:01      Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy  
11:29:48      Melissa Schlichting  
11:35:48      Rep. Shelly Fyant  
11:37:07      Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers

11:38:38      **Recessed**  
13:00:06      **Reconvened**

**UPDATES FROM THE MONTANA MISSING & MURDERED INDIGENOUS PERSONS  
ADVISORY COUNCIL**

13:00:10      Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
13:00:23      Alan Doane, Advisory Council Member

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

13:04:54      Sen. Susan Webber  
13:05:25      Alan Doane, Advisory Council Member  
13:08:38      Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
13:08:51      Alan Doane  
13:10:39      Rep. Curtis Schomer  
13:11:05      Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
13:11:22      Alan Doane

**INDIAN EDUCATION FOR ALL AND THE INDIAN LANGUAGE PRESERVATION  
PROGRAM: OVERVIEWS AND UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

13:11:26      Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
13:11:43      Katherine 'Katie' Bloodgood, Montana Office of Public Instruction  
                 [EXHIBIT 7](#)  
13:13:47      Dr. Brooke Gondara, Director, Indian Education, Montana Office of Public  
                 Instruction  
                 (See Exhibit 7)

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

13:26:55      Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy  
13:27:33      Dr. Brooke Gondara, Montana Office of Public Instruction  
13:33:45      Sen. Susan Webber  
13:34:22      Dr. Brooke Gondara  
                 [EXHIBIT 8](#)  
13:39:34      Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
13:39:39      Katherine 'Katie' Bloodgood, Montana Office of Public Instruction

**INDIAN EDUCATION FOR ALL AND THE INDIAN LANGUAGE PRESERVATION  
PROGRAM: OVERVIEWS AND UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

13:41:01      Matt Bell, Language and Culture Specialist, Montana Office of Public Instruction  
                 (See Exhibit 7)  
13:44:15      Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

13:45:30 Rep. Shelly Fyant  
13:46:04 Matt Bell, Language and Culture Specialist  
13:46:46 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
13:46:51 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy  
13:50:20 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
13:51:04 Sen. Susan Webber  
13:52:05 Dr. Brooke Gondara, Indian Education Director  
(See Exhibit 8)  
13:54:00 Katherine 'Katie' Bloodgood

**Public Comment**

13:54:37 None

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

13:55:48 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
13:55:01 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy

**UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE OF AMERICAN INDIAN HEALTH**

13:55:58 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
15:56:18 David Larson, Remote Meeting Coordinator, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
13:56:29 Stephanie Iron Shooter, Director, Office of American Indian Health  
[EXHIBIT 9](#)  
13:57:54 Kathleen (Kathy) Deserly, American Indian Child & Family Program Officer,  
Office of American Indian Health  
13:59:10 Heidi DeRoche, American Indian Health Program Officer, Office of American  
Indian Health  
14:01:06 Director Stephanie Iron Shooter, Office of American Indian Health  
14:10:17 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
14:10:19 Director Stephanie Iron Shooter

**Public Comment**

14:12:35 None

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

14:12:53 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
14:12:57 Rep. Shelly Fyant  
14:13:07 Director Stephanie Iron Shooter  
14:13:22 Heidi DeRoche, Office of American Indian Health  
14:16:46 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy  
14:17:07 Director Stephanie Iron Shooter  
14:20:39 Heidi DeRoche

**UPDATES FROM THE DEPT. OF LABOR & INDUSTRY (DLI)**

14:24:25 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
14:24:36 Sarah Swanson, Commissioner, DLI  
[EXHIBIT 10](#)  
[EXHIBIT 11](#)  
[EXHIBIT 12](#)  
14:36:23 Donnie Wetzel Jr., Tribal Liaison, DLI  
[EXHIBIT 13](#)

#### **Public Comment**

14:42:23 None

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

14:42:39 Sen. Susan Webber  
14:42:51 Donnie Wetzel Jr., DLI  
14:46:18 Sarah Swanson, DLI  
14:47:41 Rep. Shelly Fyant  
14:48:05 Sara Swanson  
14:48:58 Rep. Lyn Bennett  
14:49:52 Sarah Swanson  
14:51:31 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy  
14:52:07 Sarah Swanson  
14:57:45 Donnie Wetzel Jr.  
14:58:18 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers

15:09:00 **Recessed**

15:10:29 **Reconvened**

#### **STRC WORK PLAN OVERVIEW**

15:10:42 Dr. Casey Pallister, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
[EXHIBIT 14](#)

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

15:11:09 Sen. Susan Webber  
15:11:36 Dr. Casey Pallister, LSD

#### **STRC WORK PLAN OVERVIEW - Continued**

15:12:07 Dr. Casey Pallister

#### **WORK PLAN DISCUSSION**

##### **Calendar**

15:25:01 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
15:25:11 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy  
15:25:31 Sen. Josh Kassmier

15:27:17 Dr. Casey Pallister, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
15:27:43 Rep. Jade Sooktis  
15:27:57 Sen. Susan Webber  
15:32:41 Rep. Lyn Bennett

**Motion**

15:39:12 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy moved to approve the 2025 draft meeting schedule for the State Tribal Relations Committee.

**Vote**

15:39:17 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

**Discussion on the Vote**

15:39:29 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy  
15:39:48 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
15:39:54 Sen. Susan Webber  
15:41:28 Sen. Josh Kassmier  
15:42:22 Dr. Casey Pallister, LSD

**WORK PLAN DISCUSSION – Continued**

**Draft Work Plan**

15:42:42 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy  
15:44:12 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
15:45:12 Maddie Krezowski, Legal Staff, LSD  
15:45:57 Sen. Josh Kassmier  
15:46:05 Rep. Lyn Bennett  
15:47:14 Sen. Susan Webber  
15:47:28 Dr. Casey Pallister  
15:51:02 Rep. Shelly Fyant  
15:58:06 Rep. Curtis Schomer

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY MATTER NOT CONTAINED IN THIS AGENDA AND THAT IS WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE STRC**

16:08:38 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
16:09:00 Lance Four Star, Tiger Team Meeting  
16:14:03 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers  
16:14:23 Jade Bahr, Montana Budget & Policy Center  
16:19:35 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment: 16:20:33