



STATE TRIBAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

69th Montana Legislature

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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

Maddie Krezowski - Legal Staff
Casey Pallister - Lead Staff
Maddelyn Pennington - Secretary

MINUTES LOG

December 09, 2025
Room 137 & 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:

Rep. Tyson Running Wolf, Presiding Officer (D)
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:

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT:

Maddie Krezowski, Legal Staff
Casey Pallister, Lead Staff
Maddelyn Pennington, Secretary

AGENDA ([Attachment 1](#))

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

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

08:59:37 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf called the meeting to order at 9:07 AM. The committee secretary took roll.

STAFF UPDATES

09:00:33 Maddelyn Pennington, Secretary, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

09:00:55 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf

09:01:20 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy

09:02:57 Casey Pallister, Lead Staff, LSD

[EXHIBIT 1](#)

[EXHIBIT 2](#)

[EXHIBIT 3](#)

[EXHIBIT 4](#)

[EXHIBIT 5](#)

[EXHIBIT 6](#)

[EXHIBIT 7](#)

[EXHIBIT 8](#)

[EXHIBIT 9](#)

NATIVE AMERICAN TUITION WAIVER: OVERVIEW & RECENT CHANGES

09:07:43 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf

09:08:17 Galen Hollenbaugh, Deputy Commissioner for Government Relations & Communications, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE)

09:15:27 Joe Theil, Deputy Commissioner, Academic Research and Student Affairs, OCHE

Committee Questions / Discussion

09:21:22 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy

09:21:44 Joe Theil, OCHE

09:22:21 Galen Hollenbaugh, OCHE

09:25:44 Sen. Susan Webber

09:26:02 Joe Theil, OCHE

09:27:48 Galen Hollenbaugh, OCHE

09:28:17 Rep. Curtis Schomer

09:28:34 Joe Theil, OCHE

09:30:29 Rep. Shelly Fyant

09:32:11 Joe Theil, OCHE

09:35:09 Sen. Susan Webber

09:35:50 Joe Theil, OCHE

09:37:02 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy
09:39:09 Rep. Jade Sooktis
09:39:21 Joe Theil, OCHE
09:40:38 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers
09:41:25 Joe Theil, OCHE
09:43:12 Sen. Susan Webber
09:43:42 Joe Theil, OCHE
09:43:50 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf
09:44:17 Galen Hollenbaugh, OCHE
09:45:29 Joe Theil, OCHE

Public Comment

09:50:02 None

PROPOSAL FOR DISPLAY OF CHIEF EARL OLD PERSON BUST IN THE CAPITOL ROTUNDA

09:51:37 Sen. Susan Webber
(See Exhibit 4)
09:55:07 Casey Pallister, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 10](#)
(See Exhibit 4)

Public Comment

09:58:33 Jonnalea Tatsey– St. Goddard, Montana Electric Cooperative Association

Committee Questions / Discussion

09:59:33 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy
10:00:13 Casey Pallister, LSD
10:01:04 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf
10:01:36 Sen. Susan Webber
10:02:41 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf

10:03:30 **Recessed**
10:22:36 **Reconvened**

MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS PERSONS: STRC PROPOSAL FOR TRAINING & CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

10:22:53 Sen. Josh Kassmier left the meeting during recess.
10:24:47 Casey Pallister, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 11](#)
[EXHIBIT 12](#)
(See Exhibit 5)

10:25:41 Katie Bloodgood, Legislative Liaison, Office of Public Instruction (OPI)
[EXHIBIT 13](#)
[EXHIBIT 14](#)
[EXHIBIT 15](#)
[EXHIBIT 16](#)

Public Comment

10:31:18 None

Committee Questions / Discussion

10:31:46 Sen. Susan Webber
10:32:34 Katie Bloodgood, OPI
10:33:32 Rep. Curtis Schomer
10:34:02 Katie Bloodgood, OPI
10:34:15 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers
10:34:34 Katie Bloodgood, OPI
10:35:25 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf
10:35:33 Katie Bloodgood, OPI

10:38:41 **Recessed**

10:59:17 **Reconvened**

UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

10:59:32 Misty Kuhl, Director, Office of Indian Affairs

Public Comment

11:13:10 None

Committee Questions / Discussion

11:13:29 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy
11:18:58 Dir. Misty Kuhl, Office of Indian Affairs
11:23:22 Sen. Susan Webber
11:24:18 Dir. Misty Kuhl, Office of Indian Affairs
11:25:52 Rep. Shelly Fyant
11:26:11 Dir. Misty Kuhl, Office of Indian Affairs
11:31:11 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers
11:32:21 Dir. Misty Kuhl, Office of Indian Affairs
11:36:18 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf
11:36:28 Dir. Misty Kuhl, Office of Indian Affairs

AGENCY UPDATES

11:36:56 Heidi DeRoche, Tribal Relations Manager, Department of Public Health &

Human Services (DPHHS)

EXHIBIT 17

11:52:03 Linda Bearcrane-Couture, Anti-Human Trafficking Coordinator, Department of Corrections (DOC)
11:58:49 Mitchell Couture, Indigenous Programming Liaison, DOC
12:07:15 Nina Sanders, Curator of Indigenous Collections, Montana Historical Society (MHS)

Public Comment

12:21:18 None

Committee Questions / Discussion

12:21:33 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf
12:21:45 Heidi DeRoche, DPHHS
12:22:07 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy
12:22:28 Mitchell Couture, DOC

12:25:32 **Recessed**
14:37:00 **Reconvened**

STATE-TRIBAL CONSULTATION: OVERVIEW AND STUDY PRIMER

14:37:01 Rep. Curtis Schomer left the meeting during recess.
14:37:29 Casey Pallister, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

EXHIBIT 18

Committee Questions / Discussion

14:40:52 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers
14:41:55 Sen. Susan Webber
14:43:32 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy
14:44:19 Rep. Shelly Fyant

STATE-TRIBAL CONSULTATION: OVERVIEW AND STUDY PRIMER - Continued

14:45:14 Casey Pallister, LSD
(See Exhibit 8)
(See Exhibit 18)

Committee Questions / Discussion

14:50:14 Sen. Susan Webber

STATE-TRIBAL CONSULTATION: OVERVIEW AND STUDY PRIMER - Continued

14:50:28 Casey Pallister, LSD
EXHIBIT 19
(See Exhibit 6)

Committee Questions / Discussion

14:55:15 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy
14:55:55 Rep. Shelly Fyant
14:56:02 Casey Pallister, LSD
14:57:06 Sen. Susan Webber
14:59:45 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf
15:03:03 Sen. Susan Webber
15:05:01 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy
15:06:19 Rep. Shelly Fyant
15:06:42 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf
15:07:41 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy

Public Comment

15:09:26 None

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 29: STUDY COORDINATING EFFORTS BETWEEN OPI AND DPHHS IN ADDRESSING IMPACTS ON CHILDREN OF PRENATAL EXPOSURE TO METH AND FENTANYL

15:10:02 Casey Pallister, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
EXHIBIT 20
(See Exhibit 7)
15:12:32 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy
15:16:41 Heidi DeRoche, Tribal Relations Manager, Department of Public Health & Human Services (DPHHS)
15:20:09 Kathy Deserly, American Indian Child & Family Program Officer, DPHHS
15:26:05 Patrick Cates, Senior Manager of Special Education, Office of Public Instruction (OPI)
15:27:59 Rep. Jade Sooktis left the meeting.

Public Comment

15:29:50 Lance Four Star, Wolf Point

Committee Questions / Discussion

15:34:34 Patrick Cates, OPI
15:35:34 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy
15:37:07 Sen. Susan Webber
15:40:31 Rep. Lyn Bennett
15:41:12 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers
15:41:47 Patrick Cates, OPI
15:42:30 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf
15:42:48 Heidi DeRoche, DPHHS
15:45:28 Patrick Cates, OPI

COMMITTEE WORK SESSION, APPROVAL OF WORK PLAN, NEXT STEPS

Proposed Meeting Schedule

15:46:31 Casey Pallister, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
(See Exhibit 1)

Committee Questions / Discussion

15:48:45 Sen. Susan Webber

Motion

15:49:23 Rep. Shelly Fyant moved to approve the proposed meeting schedule.

Vote

15:49:26 Carried unanimously by voice vote.
Sen. Josh Kassmier voting 'yes' by proxy.

COMMITTEE WORK SESSION, APPROVAL OF WORK PLAN, NEXT STEPS – Continued

Work Plan

15:50:05 Casey Pallister, LSD
15:50:58 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf

Committee Questions / Discussion

15:51:18 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy
15:51:37 Casey Pallister, LSD
15:51:49 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf

COMMITTEE WORK SESSION, APPROVAL OF WORK PLAN, NEXT STEPS - Continued

Senate Joint Resolution 29

15:52:40 Casey Pallister, LSD

Committee Questions / Discussion

15:54:41 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy
15:54:58 Casey Pallister, LSD
15:56:00 Sen. Susan Webber
15:57:41 Rep. Lyn Bennett
15:58:09 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy
15:58:46 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf

COMMITTEE WORK SESSION, APPROVAL OF WORK PLAN, NEXT STEPS - Continued

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP)

15:59:44 Casey Pallister, LSD

Committee Questions / Discussion

16:00:35 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf
16:01:13 Sen. Susan Webber

16:04:13 Rep. Shelly Fyant
16:05:08 Rep. Lyn Bennett
16:05:27 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf
16:05:53 Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy
16:07:30 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf
16:07:50 Casey Pallister, LSD

Motion

16:08:40 Rep. Lyn Bennett moved to adopt the final workplan as proposed.

Vote

16:08:48 Carried unanimously by voice vote.
Sen. Josh Kassmier voting 'yes' by proxy.

Committee Questions / Discussion

16:09:08 Presiding Officer Tyson Running Wolf
16:09:35 Vice Presiding Officer Gayle Lammers

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY MATTER NOT CONTAINED IN THIS AGENDA AND THAT IS
WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE STATE TRIBAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE (STRC)**

16:10:15 Lance Four Star, Wolf Point
06:11:46 Callie Parr, Zero to Five Montana

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 16:14:50