



## TRANSPORTATION INTERIM COMMITTEE

### 69th Montana Legislature

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#### SENATE MEMBERS

Gregg Hunter  
Denley Loge  
Andrea Olsen  
Russ Tempel

#### HOUSE MEMBERS

Denise Baum  
Curtis Cochran  
Chip Fitzpatrick  
Greg Kmetz  
Zack Wirth

#### COMMITTEE STAFF

Becca Brown – Lead Staff  
Joseph Carroll – Legal Staff  
Maddelyn Pennington - Secretary

# MINUTES LOG

November 24, 2025

Room 102  
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. Russ Tempel, Presiding Officer (R)  
Rep. Chip Fitzpatrick, Vice Presiding Officer (D)  
Rep. Denise Baum (D)  
Rep. Curtis Cochran (R)  
Sen. Gregg Hunter (R)  
Rep. Greg Kmetz (R)  
Sen. Denley Loge (R)  
Sen. Andrea Olsen (D)  
Rep. Zack Wirth (R)

#### MEMBERS EXCUSED:

#### MEMBERS ABSENT:

#### STAFF PRESENT:

Becca Brown, Lead Staff  
Joseph Carroll, Legal Staff  
Maddelyn Pennington, Secretary

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

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

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

08:31:26 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel called the meeting to order at 8:31 AM. The committee secretary took roll.  
08:32:33 Maddelyn Pennington, Secretary, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

**ADMINISTRATIVE RULE REVIEW**

08:33:03 Joseph Carroll, Legal Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
[EXHIBIT 1](#)  
[EXHIBIT 2](#)  
[EXHIBIT 3](#)  
[EXHIBIT 4](#)  
[EXHIBIT 5](#)

**AGENCY OVERSIGHT: MOTOR VEHICLE DIVISION (MVD) OF THE DEPT OF JUSTICE**

08:34:25 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel  
08:34:45 Laurie Bakri, Administrator, MVD

**ADMINISTRATIVE RULE REVIEW – Continued**

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

08:35:03 Sen. Andrea Olsen  
08:37:38 Sen. Denley Loge  
08:37:56 Joseph Carroll, LSD  
08:41:19 Rep. Denise Baum  
08:41:49 Joseph Carroll, LSD  
08:43:11 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

**AGENCY OVERSIGHT: MOTOR VEHICLE DIVISION (MVD) OF THE DEPT OF JUSTICE - Continued**

08:43:25 Laurie Bakri, Administrator, MVD  
[EXHIBIT 6](#)

EXHIBIT 7 – Physical Examples of New Driver Licenses to Display Security Features, Digital Examples Available in Exhibit 6

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

08:50:28 Rep. Denise Baum  
08:50:36 Lauri Bakri, MVD  
08:51:05 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel  
08:51:17 Lauri Bakri, MVD

**AGENCY OVERSIGHT: MOTOR VEHICLE DIVISION (MVD) OF THE DEPT OF JUSTICE-Continued**

08:51:41 Lauri Bakri, MVD  
(See Exhibit 6)

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

08:58:22 Sen. Denley Loge  
08:58:40 Lauri Bakri, MVD  
08:58:45 Rep. Denise Baum  
08:59:15 Lauri Bakri, MVD  
08:59:44 Sen. Gregg Hunter  
09:00:00 Lauri Bakri, MVD  
09:00:13 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel  
09:00:19 Lauri Bakri, MVD

**AGENCY OVERSIGHT: MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (MDT)  
Department Updates**

09:01:39 Chris Dorrington, Director, MDT

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

09:06:16 Rep. Denise Baum  
09:06:36 Director Chris Dorrington, MDT

**AGENCY OVERSIGHT: MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (MDT)  
Transportation Project Selection**

09:07:29 Ryan Dahlke, P.E. Statewide Project Development Engineer, MDT

**EXHIBIT 8**

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

09:29:40 Sen. Denley Loge  
09:30:18 Ryan Dahlke, MDT  
09:32:09 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel  
09:35:02 Jon Swartz, Operations Manager, MDT  
09:41:49 Sen. Gregg Hunter  
09:42:11 Ryan Dahlke, MDT  
09:42:29 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel  
09:42:44 Ryan Dahlke, MDT

**AGENCY OVERSIGHT: MDT – Continued**

**Funding For Highway Construction/Maintenance**

09:43:24 Nicole Pallister, Chief Financial Officer, MDT  
(See Exhibit 6)

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

09:49:25 Sen. Denley Loge  
09:49:46 Nicole Pallister, MDT  
09:49:57 Director Chris Dorrington, MDT  
09:52:55 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel  
09:53:14 Director Chris Dorrington, MDT

**Public Comment**

09:54:11 None

09:54:56 **Recessed**

10:11:00 **Reconvened**

**MONTANA CONTRACTOR BIDS AND ALTERNATIVE CONTRACTING****Background and Introductions**

10:11:56 Becca Brown, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
[EXHIBIT 9](#)  
10:13:24 Dave Gates, Statewide Project Delivery Engineer, Montana Department of Transportation (MDT)  
10:13:34 Ryan Dahlke, P.E. Statewide Project Development Engineer, MDT  
10:14:28 David Smith, Executive Director, Montana Contractors Association (MCA)  
10:15:15 Dwayne Rehbein, President, Riverside Contracting  
10:16:02 Cale Fisher, Project Manager, Riverside Contracting  
10:16:21 Deb Poteet, President, Poteet Construction

**Panel Prompts: What is the current process for contracting? What are the biggest issues you see with the current process?**

10:17:04 Becca Brown, Lead Staff, LSD  
10:17:50 Dave Gates, MDT  
10:29:10 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel  
10:29:29 Dwayne Rehbein, Riverside Contracting

[EXHIBIT 10](#)

(Dwayne Rehbein noted in meeting that this exhibit, in the bottom-right circle, should state "direct" costs instead of "indirect".)

10:35:10 Cale Fisher, Riverside Contracting

**Background and Introductions - Continued**

10:38:08 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel  
10:38:39 Nick Miller, President, Missouri River Contractors  
10:39:51 Kurtis Paulson, Project Manager, Knife River Contracting

**Panel Prompts: What is the current process for contracting? What are the biggest issues you see with the current process? - Continued**

10:40:33 Dwayne Rehbein, Riverside Contracting  
(See Exhibit 10)  
10:40:57 David Smith, MCA  
10:45:44 Nick Miller, Missouri River Contractors  
10:46:03 Dave Gates, MDT  
10:52:00 Deb Poteet, Poteet Construction  
10:54:49 Kurtis Paulson, Knife River Contracting  
10:55:02 Dwayne Rehbein, Riverside Contracting

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

10:56:16 Rep. Greg Kmetz  
10:56:56 David Smith, MCA  
10:58:00 Rep. Zack Wirth  
10:58:42 Dwayne Rehbein, Riverside Contracting  
11:00:33 Deb Poteet, Poteet Construction  
11:00:56 Dave Gates, MDT  
11:02:34 Cale Fisher, Riverside Contracting  
11:06:21 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel  
11:06:35 Dwayne Rehbein, Riverside Contracting  
11:08:46 Nick Miller, Missouri River Contractors  
11:18:09 Chris Dorrington, Director, MDT  
11:20:27 Sen. Denley Loge  
11:21:17 Dave Gates, MDT  
11:22:15 Ryan Dahlke, MDT  
11:26:02 Deb Poteet, Poteet Construction  
11:26:50 Director Chris Dorrington, MDT  
11:27:27 Sen. Denley Loge  
11:27:58 Dwayne Rehbein, Riverside Contracting  
11:29:17 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel  
11:29:35 David Smith, MCA  
11:30:27 Joseph Carroll, Legal Staff, LSD

**Public Comment**

11:31:00 None

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

11:31:20 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel  
11:31:26 Sen. Denley Loge

11:32:48      **Recessed**  
13:30:41      **Reconvened**

**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 19: INTERIM STUDY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

13:30:57      Becca Brown, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

[EXHIBIT 11](#)

13:37:25      Joseph Carroll, Legal Staff, LSD

[EXHIBIT 12](#)

(This is a draft document that may be edited in future meetings.)

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

13:42:40      Sen. Denley Loge

13:42:43      Joseph Carroll, LSD

**SJ 19: INTERIM STUDY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION - Continued**

**Reflections from Autonomous Vehicles (AVs) visit in AZ Presiding Officer**

13:44:09      Becca Brown, Lead Staff, LSD

13:44:44      Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

[EXHIBIT 13](#)

13:46:10      Sen. Denley Loge

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

13:54:47      Rep. Zack Wirth

13:55:00      Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

13:55:14      Sen. Denley Loge

13:55:37      Rep. Curtis Cochran

13:55:40      Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

13:55:48      Sen. Denley Loge

13:57:19      Rep. Denise Baum

13:57:42      Sen. Denley Loge

13:58:10      Sen. Gregg Hunter

13:58:25      Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

13:58:37      Sen. Denley Loge

14:02:12      Rep. Denise Baum

14:02:40      Sen. Denley Loge

14:03:42      Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

14:05:15      Rep. Zack Wirth

14:05:51      Sen. Andrea Olsen

14:07:14      Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

14:09:14      Sen. Denley Loge

**SJ 19: INTERIM STUDY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION - Continued  
Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) / Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority  
(BSPRA) Reflections**

14:12:41 Rep. Denise Baum

[EXHIBIT 14](#)

[EXHIBIT 15](#)

14:13:33 Becca Brown, Lead Staff, LSD

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

14:19:11 Sen. Denley Loge

14:19:33 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

14:20:45 Sen. Andrea Olsen

**SJ 19: INTERIM STUDY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION - Continued**

**State Rail Plans**

14:25:05 Doug McBroom, Maintenance Bureau Operations Manager, Department of Transportation (MDT)

[EXHIBIT 16](#)

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

14:33:01 Rep. Denise Baum

14:33:18 Doug McBroom, MDT

14:38:53 Sen. Andrea Olsen

14:40:26 Doug McBroom, MDT

14:46:25 Chris Dorrington, Director, MDT

14:48:24 Rep. Denise Baum

14:54:03 Sen. Andrea Olsen

14:54:08 Director Chris Dorrington

15:00:17 Sen. Andrea Olsen

15:01:51 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

**SJ 19: INTERIM STUDY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION - Continued**

**Public Survey**

15:02:14 Rep. Denise Baum

[EXHIBIT 17](#)

**SJ 19: INTERIM STUDY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION – Continued**

**Essential Air Service (EAS) Funding Update**

15:05:28 Becca Brown, LSD

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

15:07:01 Rep. Denise Baum

15:07:19 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

**SJ 19: INTERIM STUDY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION – Continued  
Essential Air Service (EAS) Funding Update**

15:07:34 Becca Brown, LSD

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

15:07:54 None

**Public Comment**

15:08:09 Cassie Wick, Ability Montana  
15:11:13 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel  
15:11:21 Krista Gabriel, Disability Rights Montana  
15:13:31 Shyla Patera, Northcentral Independent Living Services, Great Falls  
15:16:20 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel  
15:16:29 Rep. Denise Baum  
15:16:55 Rich Wallace, Sanders County

**COMMITTEE WORK SESSION**

**Highway 212**

15:22:15 Joseph Carroll, Legal Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
15:24:19 Vice Presiding Officer Chip Fitzpatrick  
15:27:25 Becca Brown, Lead Staff, LSD

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

15:27:44 Sen. Andrea Olsen  
15:29:33 Sen. Denley Loge  
15:29:48 Eric Belford, Administrator, Motor Carrier Services (MCS)  
15:32:01 Rep. Denise Baum  
15:32:57 Chris Dorrington, Director, Montana Department of Transportation (MDT)  
15:33:20 Vice Presiding Officer Chip Fitzpatrick  
15:33:37 Eric Belford, MCS  
15:34:45 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel  
15:35:00 Sen. Andrea Olsen  
15:36:34 Director Chris Dorrington, MDT  
15:37:13 Rep. Denise Baum  
15:38:39 Director Chris Dorrington  
15:39:46 Sen. Denley Loge  
15:40:36 Sen. Gregg Hunter  
15:40:55 Eric Belford, MDT

**COMMITTEE WORK SESSION – Continued**

**Committee Letter To USDOT On Ninepipe Funding Recission**

15:41:18 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

15:41:36 Becca Brown, LSD

[EXHIBIT 18](#)

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

15:43:30 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

15:43:45 Rep. Denise Baum

15:44:04 Sen. Andrea Olsen

15:45:03 Becca Brown, LSD

15:45:53 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

15:46:03 Sen. Denley Loge

15:46:29 Director Chris Dorrington, MDT

**Motion**

15:47:39 Sen. Andrea Olsen moved to sign the proposed letter and send it to the Federal Department of Transportation and to the Montana Federal Delegation.

**Vote**

15:48:32 Carried 8 – 1 by voice vote with Rep. Zack Wirth voting 'no'.

**COMMITTEE WORK SESSION – Continued**

**Committee Field Trip**

15:48:55 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

15:49:11 Becca Brown, LSD

[EXHIBIT 19](#)

**Committee Questions / Discussion**

15:50:41 Rep. Denise Baum

15:51:37 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

15:51:40 Sen. Denley Loge

15:52:44 Sen. Andrea Olsen

15:54:00 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

15:54:07 Rep. Zack Wirth

15:55:12 Rep. Greg Kmetz

15:56:00 Sen. Gregg Hunter

15:56:30 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

15:56:37 Becca Brown, LSD

**COMMITTEE WORK SESSION – Continued**

**Public Survey - Continued**

15:57:33 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel

15:57:59 Sen. Gregg Hunter

15:58:29 Rep. Denise Baum

16:00:56	Presiding Officer Russ Tempel
16:01:17	Sen. Denley Loge
16:02:33	Rep. Denise Baum
16:03:53	Sen. Gregg Hunter
16:05:18	Sen. Andrea Olsen
16:10:29	Becca Brown, LSD
16:11:10	Rep. Denise Baum
16:44:48	Vice Presiding Officer Chip Fitzpatrick
16:11:51	Joseph Carroll, Legal Staff, LSD
16:12:21	Rep. Curtis Cochran
16:12:42	Rep. Denise Baum
16:13:42	Sen. Denley Loge
16:14:03	Sen. Andrea Olsen
16:15:17	Joseph Carroll, LSD
16:16:14	Presiding Officer Russ Tempel
16:16:15	Sen. Andrea Olsen

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment: 16:18:03