



TRANSPORTATION INTERIM COMMITTEE

69th Montana Legislature

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 Laurie Bakri, MVD
- 08:51:05 Presiding Officer Russ Tempel
- 08:51:17 Laurie 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