

Economic Development Bills Enacted by the 2005 Legislature

Purpose of Bill	Bill	Sponsor	Relevant content
Support for Hypersonic Wind Tunnel	HJ 16	Groesbeck	Backs MARIAH (Magnetohydrodynamic Accelerated Research into Advanced Hypersonics) project in Butte and at Malmstrom Air Force Base.
Study community impacts at Superfund Sites	HJ 34	Cohenour	Review requested of environmental, economic, and social impacts on communities near Superfund Sites. Study assigned to EQC.
Study Economic Development in Indian Country	HJ 41	Campbell	Study requested of human, education & natural resources and revenue generation potential of tribes. Study assigned to the State-Tribal Relations Interim Committee.
Extend the State-Tribal Economic Development Commission	HB 18	Juneau	Extends the commission to 6/2009 and sets a 6-member quorum.
Allow multiple small quarries to operate under 1 permit with conditions.	HB 147	Clark	Defines rock products; allows multiple rock quarries with one permit under certain conditions.
Repeal the Foreign Capital Depository Act.	HB 223	Jent	Repeals a 1997 law intended to attract and regulate in-state depositories for foreign capital.
Economic Development Trust Fund	HB 249	Lindeen	Creates the Big Sky Economic Development Fund with \$20 million in 2005 from coal severance tax permanent fund and 25% of specified excess of coal severance tax bond fund through 6/2025. The Fund is to be used for a specified range of economic development purposes.
Revise Primary Sector WorkForce	HB 270	Lindeen	Changes program from one providing loans to one making grants; moves program to the Department of Commerce from the Governor's Office; revises termination date to 2009; revises grant committee representation; provides funding is subject to appropriation; ties award of grant to completed training; provides clawback provisions.
Dinosaur park in Malta	HB 423	Stahl	Provides funding for a research facility and a park.
Revise aerospace technology bond program	HB 493	Noonan	Allows contracts with port or airport authorities; requires state to be on list of insureds under both design and construction aspects of a project; requires architectural and engineering review. Requires contractor to have liability and workers compensation insurance. Gives project developer right of first refusal for project and project improvements financed by bonds. Provides intent for debt service to be correlated with project income tax using multiplier effect; sets project bonding factors. Bond proceeds to be available on first-come, first-serve basis.
Revise metal mines license tax use	HB 700	Mendenhall	Cuts by 1% the amount deposited in the general fund (now 57%). Adds 1% to amount provided to a county (now 25%). Eliminates general purpose use.
Regulatory certainty for land use	HB 720	Sinrud	Requires a timed receipt to be given to a developer if no other regulations are in place. Requires local government standards and timing for developer-applicants who must meet standards in place when the application was filed.
Create Rail Service Competition Council	HB 769	Golie	12-member council is created and attached to the Governor's Office to promote rail service. Council is to analyze state tax policy affecting railroads, assess competitive options, and serve as a liaison with the railroads.

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Encourages tribal adoption of secured transaction commercial codes	SJ 4	Cobb	Encourages each tribal government in Montana to adopt the model law on tribal secured transaction commercial codes and to provide tribal courts with ongoing training. Interim committee to provide update to Legislature on adoption of model law and training.
Revise Independent Contractor laws	SB 108	Lewis	Revised ways for independent contractors to prove they have an independent business and are free of control from the contracting agent. A certificate exempting an independent contractor from carrying workers' compensation insurance is to be conclusive proof of IC status. Department allowed to charge higher fees for education and verification of status. Retains requirements for independent business and freedom from control. Exempts certain workers from needing IC.
New 3% tax classification for certain wind energy facilities	SB 115	Tester	Creates a 3% Class 14 property tax for certain wind generation facilities that paid the prevailing rate of wages for heavy construction during construction. Allows impact fees for local governments and school districts. Allows interlocal impact agreements.
Tax credit for venture capital formation	SB 133	Mangan	Creates Montana Capital Investment Board that in turn is to hire a designated investor group whose role is to attract equity venture funds to provide equity and near-equity capital to Montana entrepreneurs. Provides transferable, contingent, deferred tax credits and conditions for redeeming tax credits. Sets criteria for designated investor group investments.
Clarify Made-in-MT program	SB 329	Tester	Includes as a Department of Commerce duty the provision of training and assistance to expand markets for made-in-Montana products.
Expand Alternate Energy	SB 415	Tester	Sets a graduated standard for renewable energy purchases by certain public utilities, starting in 2008 and reaching 15% in 2015. Provides criteria. Some purchases to be made from community renewable energy projects. Provides noncompliance penalties and waivers. Requires Public Service Commission to adopt rules for tracking renewable energy credits.