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ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY INTERIM COMMITTEE
69th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS	HOUSE MEMBERS	COMMITTEE STAFF
Gregg Hunter	Bob Carter	Griffin Burns – Lead Staff
Gayle Lammers	Becky Edwards - Vice Presiding Officer	Jacelyn Sterling - Secretary
Christopher Pope	Gary Parry	Jameson Walker – Legal Staff
Daniel Zolnikov – Presiding Officer	Kerri Seekins-Crowe	
	Katie Zolnikov	

MINUTES LOG

September 09, 2026
Room 154 & Zoom
Helena, Montana

Minutes logs provide an annotation of the time elapsed between the beginning of a meeting and the time at which a topic is presented or discussed, a motion made, or a vote taken. The time designation may be used to locate the referenced discussion in the video. The minutes log is only a guide to the video of the meeting. The official record of the meeting is the video. Minutes logs can be accessed at https://committees.legmt.gov and videos can be accessed at https://media.legmt.gov.

For more information, please contact:
The Legislative Services Division at 406-444-3064 for policy committees;
The Legislative Fiscal Division at 406-444-2986 for fiscal committees; or
The Legislative Audit Division at 406-444-3122 for the Legislative Audit Committee.

MEMBERS PRESENT:
Sen. Christopher Pope (D)
Sen. Daniel Zolnikov, Presiding Officer (R)
Sen. Gregg Hunter (R)
Sen. Gayle Lammers (R)
Rep. Katie Zolnikov (R)
Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe (R)
Rep. Gary Parry (R)
Rep. Bob Carter (D)
Rep. Becky Edwards, Vice Presiding Officer (D)

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT:
Jameson Walker, Legal Staff
Griffin Burns, Lead Staff
Jacelyn Sterling, Secretary

MONTANA LEGISLATIVE BRANCH MANAGEMENT: JERRY HOWE, LEGISLATIVE SERVICES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR • ANGUS MACIVER, LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR • AMY CARLSON, LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ANALYST • TODD EVERTS, LEGAL SERVICES DIRECTOR • DALE GOW, CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER • RACHEL WEISS, RESEARCH DIRECTOR • ANGIE CARTER, FINANCIAL OFFICE DIRECTOR • KELLY DASILVA, HR DIRECTOR

AGENDA (Attachment 1)

VISITORS' LIST (Attachment 2)

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

00:00:00 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov called the meeting to order at 9:07 AM. The committee secretary took roll.

ENERGY TASK FORCE UPDATE

00:01:34 Sonja Nowakowski, Director, Department of Environmental Quality Council (DEQ)

EXHIBIT 1

Public Comment

00:05:35 Sara Clerget, Large Customer Group

00:06:04 Joe Kolman, Montana Electric Cooperatives Association

00:06:45 Kate Wilson, Bonneville Power Administration

00:07:15 Makenna Sellers, Executive Director, Montana Renewable Energy Association

00:08:19 Jennifer Fielder, Vice President, Montana Public Service Commission (PSC)

Committee Questions / Discussion

00:15:00 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

00:15:52 Jennifer Fielder, PSC

00:17:34 Rep. Bob Carter

00:17:53 Jennifer Fielder, PSC

00:18:45 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

00:19:11 Sen. Christopher Pope

00:25:01 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

00:26:19 Rep. Gary Parry

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION UPDATE

00:28:01 Jennifer Fielder, Vice President, Public Service Commission (PSC)

00:29:36 Michael Turner, PSC

EXHIBIT 2

00:34:00 Jenniefer Fielder, PSC

EXHIBIT 3

Committee Questions / Discussion

00:44:58 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

00:45:11 Sen. Christopher Pope

00:46:07 Jennifer Fielder, PSC

00:47:13 Sen. Christopher Pope

00:47:33 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

00:50:23 Jennifer Fielder, PSC

Public Comment
00:50:57 Ann Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center

PROVISIONAL DRAFT LEGISLATION 0013 - NEW LARGE LOADS TO BE SERVED BY A PUBLIC UTILITY"—COST SHIFT PREVENTION
00:53:56 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
EXHIBIT 4

Public Comment
01:00:53 Sara Clerget, Large Customer Group
01:02:29 Steve Wade, NorthWestern Energy (NWE)
01:03:42 Amy Grmoljez, Montana Dakota Utilities
01:05:21 Ann Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center
01:09:34 Derek Goldman, NW Energy Coalition

Committee Questions / Discussion
01:12:56 Rep. Katie Zolnikov
01:14:56 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
01:16:01 Sen. Gayle Lammers
01:18:50 Sen. Christopher Pope
01:19:25 Steve Wade, NWE
01:20:01 Sen. Christopher Pope
01:20:36 Mike Green, General Council, NWE
01:22:55 Sen. Christopher Pope
01:23:43 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
01:24:26 Rep. Bob Carter
01:24:53 Mike Green, NWE
01:26:30 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

Motion
01:29:21 Rep. Bob Carter Moved PD0013 be approved as a committee bill and moved forward for preintroduction.
Carrier Assigned:

Commented [JS1]: Griffin, who was assigned for this one?

Vote
01:29:42 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 12/21 FINAL REPORT - DRAFT
01:30:16 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
EXHIBIT 5

Public Comment
01:37:47 None

Committee Questions / Discussion
01:37:52 None

01:38:17 **Recessed**
01:56:30 **Reconvened**

PROVISIONAL DRAFT LEGISLATION 0021 - GENERALLY REVISING CONSUMER PROTECTION LAWS
01:56:39 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
EXHIBIT 6

Public Comment
02:06:10 Emilia Gilsdorf, Tech Montana
02:09:01 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
02:09:30 Bridger Mahlum, Broadband Montana
02:10:40 Stacy Anderson, Montana Chapter of the Academy of Pediatrics

Committee Questions / Discussion
02:12:31 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
02:12:53 Rep. Bob Carter
02:13:10 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division
02:13:59 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
02:14:56 Sen. Christopher Pope
02:16:10 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
02:19:10 Rep. Katie Zolnikov
02:25:27 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
02:26:13 Rep. Gary Parry
02:26:18 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

Motion
02:26:56 Rep. Gary Parry moved PD0021 be approved as a committee bill and move forward for preintroduction.

Vote
02:27:14 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

PROVISIONAL DRAFT LEGISLATION 009- "GENERALLY REVISING LAWS RELATED TO PRIVACY"
02:27:29 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
EXHIBIT 7

Motion
02:31:03 Rep. Bob Carter moved to reconsider previous committee action on PD0009

Vote

02:31:03 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

Motion
02:31:17 Rep. Bob Carter Moved PD0009 be approved as committee bill and move forward for preintroduction.
Carrier Assigned: Sen. Daniel Zolnikov

Discussion on the motion

02:31:34 Rep. Bob Carter

02:32:16 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division

02:32:41 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

Vote

02:34:03 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

Motion
02:34:41 Rep. Gary Parry moved PD0021 be approved as a committee bill and move forward for preintroduction.
Carrier Assigned:

Commented [JS2]: Griffin who was assigned for this one

Vote

02:35:11 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

PROVISIONAL DRAFT LEGISLATION 010 & 011- "REVISING LAWS RELATED TO GEOTHERMAL ENERGY"
02:35:37 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

02:35:52 Rep. Bob Carter
EXHIBIT 8

02:37:30 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

02:38:23 Ben Brouwer, Department of Environmental Quality

Public Comment
02:40:55 Nick Fitzmaurice, Montana Environmental Information Center

Committee Questions / Discussion
02:43:42 Rep. Gary Parry

Motion

02:44:11 Rep. Gary Parry moved PD0010 be approved as a committee bill and move forward for preintroduction.
Carrier Assigned: Rep. Becky Edwards

Vote

02:46:43 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

PROVISIONAL DRAFT LEGISLATION 010 & 011- "REVISING LAWS RELATED TO GEOTHERMAL ENERGY"- Continued

02:48:20 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
EXHIBIT 9

Public Comment

02:49:57 John Lafei, Bureau of Mines and Geology (BMG)

Committee Questions / Discussion

02:52:43 Rep. Gary Parry
02:53:04 John Lefei, BMG
02:54:37 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
02:55:41 Rep. Bob Carter
02:56:05 John Lefei, BMG
02:57:04 Sen. Christopher Pope
02:59:43 John Lefei, BMG
03:00:23 Rep. Gary Parry
03:02:06 John Lefei, BMG
03:03:52 Sen. Gayle Lammers
03:04:22 John Lefei, BMG
03:05:15 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

Motion

03:05:59 Rep. Gary Parry moved PD0011 be approved as a committee bill and moved forward for preintroduction.
Carrier Assigned: Rep. Becky Edwards

Vote

03:06:32 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

PROVISIONAL DRAFT LEGISLATION 004 & 005- "RAILROAD CROSSINGS & EQUAL TREATMENTOF RAILROAD ROW USERS"

03:07:09 Presiding Officer Zolinkov

Public Comment

03:07:20 Jennifer Olson, Montana League of Cities and Towns (MLCT)
03:09:31 Matt Jones, BNSF
03:23:45 Bridger Mahlum, Broadband Montana

03:27:24 Joe Kolman, Montana Electric Association Cooperatives
03:29:02 John Williams

Committee Questions / Discussion
03:30:34 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
03:31:57 Rep. Bob Carter
03:37:05 Jennifer Olson, MLCT
03:37:29 Sen. Christopher Pope
03:39:32 Matt Jones, BNSF
03:41:23 Sen. Christopher Pope
03:44:38 Jennifer Olson, MLCT
03:44:52 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
03:46:39 Jennifer Olson, MLCT
03:48:33 Sen. Christopher Pope
03:53:01 Rep. Gary Parry

Motion
03:55:17 Rep. Gary Parry Moved PD 0004 be approved as a committee bill for and move forward preintroduction.
Carrier Assigned: Rep. Gary Parry

Discussion on Motion
03:55:35 Rep. Bob Carter
03:56:10 Sen. Christopher Pope
03:58:55 Rep. Gary Parry
03:59:55 Sen. Christopher Pope
04:00:19 Rep. Bob Carter
04:00:35 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

Vote
04:02:27 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

Committee Discussion
04:03:16 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

Public Comment
04:03:24 None

04:03:54 **Recessed**

05:02:36 **Reconvened**

PROVISIONAL DRAFT LEGISLATION 002 & 003- INTERSTATE TRANSMISSION DEVELOPMENT COMPACT AND TRANSMISSION EXPANSION AND MODERNIZATION ACT(S)

05:03:03 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
05:03:12 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division, (LSD)
EXHIBIT 10

Public Comment

05:14:35 David Herbst, American Power Play (APP)
05:18:51 Brent Bailey, APP
05:20:42 Darryl James, Independent Consultant, Helena
05:24:59 Ann Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center
05:30:15 Steve Wade, NorthWestern Energy
05:31:35 Amy Gromoljez, Montana Dakota Utilities Resources

Committee Questions / Discussion

05:33:12 Rep. Gary Parry
05:33:55 Brent Bailey, APP
05:35:07 Rep. Gary Parry
05:35:44 David Herbst, APP
05:36:16 Sen. Gayle Lammers
05:36:36 David Herbst, APP
05:37:05 Brent Bailey, APP
05:37:58 David Herbst
05:38:09 Sen. Gayle Lammers
05:38:32 Griffin Burns, LSD
05:39:24 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
05:41:30 David Herbst, APP
05:43:01 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
05:43:45 Darryl James
05:45:45 Rep. Bob Carter
05:46:00 Darryl James
05:46:37 Rep. Gary Parry
05:47:04 Darryl James
05:48:02 Sen. Christopher Pope
05:49:43 David Herbst, APP
05:51:42 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
05:53:59 David Herbst, APP
05:54:32 Darryl James
05:56:59 Rep. Bob Carter
05:58:16 Sen. Gregg Hunter

05:58:53 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
05:59:21 Rep. Gary Parry
06:00:14 Rep. Bob Carter
06:01:04 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
06:02:38 Griffin Burns, LSD
06:03:41 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
06:03:44 Sen. Christopher Pope
06:04:59 Sen. Gayle Lammers
06:05:53 Sen. Gregg Hunter
06:06:27 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov
06:06:36 Rep. Gary Parry

PROVISIONAL DRAFT LEGISLATION PD0012- "GRID UTILIZATION ACT"

06:07:25 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
EXHIBIT 11
06:11:19 Sen. Christopher Pope

Public Comment

06:17:44 Nick Fitzmaurice, Montana Environmental Information Center
06:19:45 Makenna Sellers, Montana Renewable Energy Association
06:20:55 Jan Rouse, NorthWestern Energy
06:23:09 Amy Grmoljez, Montana Dakota Utilities Resources
06:24:27 Ian Mangruder, Executive Director, Utilize Coalition
06:25:42 Derek Goldman, NW Energy Coalition

Motion

06:27:15 Rep. Bob Carter moved PD0012 be approved as a committee bill and move forward for preintroduction.
Carrier Assigned: Sen. Christopher Pope

Vote

06:27:36 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

PROVISIONAL DRAFT LEGISLATION 0006- "SOLAR SHARES ACT"

06:28:45 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
EXHIBIT 12
06:30:52 Sen. Christopher Pope

Public Comment

06:37:34 Makenna Sellers, Montana Renewable Energy Association
06:40:38 Nick Fitzmaurice, Montana Environmental Information Center
06:40:57 Amy Grmoljez, Montana Dakota Resources Utilities
06:41:39 Steve Wade, NorthWestern Energy

Committee Questions / Discussion

06:42:30 Rep. Gary Parry

06:47:22 Sen. Christopher Pope

06:48:33 Griffin Burns, LSD

EXHIBIT 13

Motion

06:48:47 Rep. Bob Carter moved PD006 be approved as committee bill and move forward for preintroduction.

Motion

06:49:01 Rep. Carter moved to amend PD0006 with proposed amendments from Sen. Pope
(see exhibit 13)

Vote

06:49:29 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

Motion

06:49:38 Rep. Carter Moved PD006 be approved as amended as a committee bill and move forward for preintroduction
Carrier Assigned: Sen. Christopher Pope.

Vote

06:50:00 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF ETIC

06:50:41 Brad Molnar

COMMITTEE WORK SESSION

07:02:34 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

EXHIBIT 24

Motion

07:03:41 Sen. Gayle Lammers moved to adopt the draft final report.

Vote

07:04:07 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

COMMITTEE WORK SESSION - Continued

07:04:31 Griffin Burns, LSD

07:09:33 Jameson Walker, Legal Staff, LSD Clarifying carrier rules with appropriations

07:09:55 Griffin Burns, LSD

07:10:30 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

07:10:51 Sen. Christopher Pope
07:11:31 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

ADJOURNMENT
Adjournment: 07:12:52