



## **ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY INTERIM COMMITTEE**

### **69th Montana Legislature**

#### **SENATE MEMBERS**

Gregg Hunter  
Gayle Lammers  
Christopher Pope  
Daniel Zolnikov

#### **HOUSE MEMBERS**

Bob Carter  
Becky Edwards  
Gary Parry  
Kerri Seekins-Crowe  
Katie Zolnikov

#### **COMMITTEE STAFF**

Griffin Burns – Lead Staff  
Maddelyn Pennington - Secretary  
Jameson Walker – Legal Staff

# **MINUTES LOG**

March 26, 2026  
Room 152 & 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. Daniel Zolnikov, Presiding Officer (R)  
Rep. Becky Edwards, Vice Presiding Officer (D)  
Rep. Bob Carter (D)  
Sen. Gregg Hunter (R)  
Sen. Gayle Lammers (R)  
Rep. Gary Parry (R)  
Sen. Christopher Pope (D)

#### **MEMBERS EXCUSED AT ROLL CALL:**

Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe (R)  
Rep. Katie Zolnikov (R)

#### **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

#### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Griffin Burns, Lead Staff  
Maddelyn Pennington, Secretary  
Jameson Walker, Legal Staff

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

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

#### **CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

09:02:35 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM. The committee secretary took roll.

#### **Committee Opening Discussion**

09:02:03 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
09:02:59 Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe joined the meeting in person.  
09:03:05 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
09:07:31 Rep. Katie Zolnikov joined the meeting via zoom

#### **GEOHERMAL DEVELOPMENT- FERVO ENERGY**

09:03:21 Jack Conness, Senior Policy and Regulatory Affairs Associate, Fervo Energy

[EXHIBIT 1](#)

#### **Public Comment**

09:32:26 None

#### **Committee Discussion / Questions**

09:32:42 Rep. Bob Carter  
09:32:55 Jack Conness, Fervo Energy  
09:34:40 Sen. Gayle Lammers  
09:35:13 Jack Conness, Fervo Energy  
09:36:50 Rep. Gary Parry  
09:36:51 Jack Conness, Fervo Energy  
09:39:09 Sen. Christopher Pope  
09:39:10 Jack Conness, Fervo Energy  
09:45:00 Vice Presiding Officer Becky Edwards  
09:45:02 Jack Conness, Fervo Energy  
09:47:54 Rep. Gary Parry  
09:47:56 Jack Conness, Fervo Energy  
09:48:59 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
09:49:00 Jack Conness, Fervo Energy

#### **GEOHERMAL WORKING GROUP UPDATE**

09:53:32 Vice Presiding Officer Becky Edwards

[EXHIBIT 2](#)

09:56:43 Dan Walsh, Air, Energy and Mining Division Administrator, Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)  
(See EXHIBIT 2)

**Public Comment**

09:59:59 None

**Committee Discussion / Questions**

10:00:01 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
10:00:16 Vice Presiding Officer Becky Edwards  
10:00:46 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
10:01:05 Rep. Bob Carter  
10:01:26 Vice Presiding Officer Becky Edwards  
10:01:31 Dan Walsh, DEQ  
10:01:44 Rep. Bob Carter  
10:02:10 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
10:02:23 Vice Presiding Officer Becky Edwards  
10:02:41 Sen. Christopher Pope  
10:04:34 Sen. Gregg Hunter  
10:05:26 Vice Presiding Officer Becky Edwards  
10:05:55 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

**MT PROJECT(S) UPDATE- GLACIER BATTERY SYSTEM AND GLACIER SOLAR PARK**

10:06:34 Michael Freeman, Berkshire Hathaway Energy (BHE) Montana

[EXHIBIT 3](#)

**Public Comment**

10:16:40 None

**Committee Discussion / Questions**

10:16:38 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
10:16:49 Michael T. Freeman, BHE Montana  
10:17:25 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
10:17:43 Sen. Christopher Pope  
10:19:56 Michael Freeman, BHE Montana  
10:20:13 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov left the meeting. Vice Presiding Officer Becky Edwards assumed the position of Acting Presiding Officer.  
10:21:09 Sen. Gregg Hunter  
10:22:30 Michael Freeman, BHE Montana  
10:23:09 Rep. Gary Parry  
10:23:51 Michael Freeman, BHE Montana  
10:26:10 Sen. Gayle Lammers  
10:27:48 Michael Freeman, BHE Montana  
10:28:26 Sen. Gayle Lammers

10:29:02      **Recessed**  
10:48:44      **Reconvened**  
10:48:44      Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov returned to the meeting and resumed the position of Acting Presiding Officer.

**“A PATHWAY TO A WEST-WIDE ENERGY MARKET” – ADVANCED ENERGY UNITED**

10:48:40      Leah Rubin Shen, Managing Director, Western Advocacy Team, Advanced Energy United  
[EXHIBIT 4](#)  
[EXHIBIT 5](#)

**Public Comment**

11:08:40      Kyle Unruh, Director, Montana & Idaho, Renewable Northwest

**Committee Discussion / Questions**

11:10:26      Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
11:10:40      Kyle Unruh, Renewable Northwest  
11:11:44      Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
11:11:47      Leah Rubin Shen, Advanced Energy United  
11:12:00      Rep. Gary Parry  
11:12:27      Leah Rubin Shen, Advanced Energy United  
11:13:09      Sen. Christopher Pope  
11:16:20      Leah Rubin Shen, Advanced Energy United  
11:17:02      Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
11:18:36      Leah Rubin Shen, Advanced Energy United  
11:19:38      Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
11:21:50      Leah Rubin Shen, Advanced Energy United  
11:22:00      Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

11:22:51      **Recessed**

13:02:20      **Reconvened**

**ENERGY TASK FORCE & PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION UPDATE**

13:03:04      Sonja Nowakowski, Director, Department of Environmental Quality & Chair, Governors Energy Task Force

**Public Comment**

13:14:39      None

**Committee Discussion / Questions**

13:15:00      Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
13:18:42      Dir. Sonja Nowakowski, DEQ

13:18:54 Sen. Christopher Pope  
13:20:16 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
13:21:10 Dir. Sonja Nowakowski, DEQ  
13:21:33 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
13:22:10 Sen. Christopher Pope  
13:24:06 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

**ENERGY TASK FORCE & PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION (PSC) UPDATE  
Status of Dockets and Litigation**

13:26:15 Jamey Petersen, Interim Executive Director, External Affairs, PSC

[EXHIBIT 6](#)

[EXHIBIT 7](#)

[EXHIBIT 8](#)

13:28:05 Will Rosquist, Administrator, Regulatory Division, PSC  
(See EXHIBIT 6)

13:37:31 Amanda Webster, Interim Chief Legal Counsel, PSC  
(See EXHIBIT 7)

**Committee Discussion / Questions**

13:40:33 Sen. Christopher Pope  
13:41:55 Will Rosquist, PSC  
13:43:11 Sen. Christopher Pope  
13:43:46 Will Rosquist, PSC  
13:44:38 Sen. Christopher Pope  
13:45:46 Jamey Petersen, PSC  
13:48:21 Rep. Bob Carter  
13:48:50 Will Rosquist, PSC  
13:50:12 Sen. Gayle Lammers  
13:50:41 Will Rosquist, PSC  
13:52:27 Vice Presiding Officer Becky Edwards  
13:53:33 Will Rosquist, PSC  
13:53:38 Amanda Webster, PSC

**Public Comment**

13:54:20 None

**LARGE LOADS: INTERCONNECTION, TARIFF DESIGNS AND STATE ACTIONS**

13:55:29 Natalie Mims Frick, Berkeley Lab

[EXHIBIT 11](#)

14:02:59 Long Lam, Managing Associate Brattle Group

14:15:02 Natalie Mims Frick, Berkeley Lab

**Public Comment**

14:28:20 None

**Committee Discussion / Questions**

14:28:42 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

14:29:05 Natalie Mims Frick, Berkeley Lab

14:30:31 Long Lam, Brattle Group

14:31:15 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

14:31:31 Natalie Mims Frick, Berkeley Lab

14:32:22 Sen. Christopher Pope

14:33:17 Natalie Mims Frick, Berkeley Lab

14:33:49 Long Lam, Brattle Group

14:35:12 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

**PROVISIONAL DRAFT LEGISLATION 002 & 003- "INTERSTATE COMPETITIVE TRANSMISSION DEVELOPMENT COMPACT ACT"**

14:36:03 David Herbst, American Power Play

[EXHIBIT 12](#)

14:43:29 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

[EXHIBIT 13](#)

[EXHIBIT 14](#)

**Public Comment**

14:44:24 Allan Olsen, Director, Government Affairs, NorthWestern Energy (NWE)

14:49:54 David Herbst, American Power Play

14:50:20 Allan Olsen, NWE

**Committee Discussion / Questions**

14:51:04 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

14:53:27 Griffin Burns, LSD

14:53:44 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

14:54:52 David Herbst, American Power Play

14:55:57 **Recessed**

15:02:29 **Reconvened**

**THE EXTRATEMPESTRAL MODEL**

15:03:21 Michael Masters, Professor, Montana Technological University (Montana Tech)

[EXHIBIT 15](#)

**Public Comment**

15:51:17 None

**Committee Discussion / Questions**

15:51:50 Rep. Bob Carter  
15:54:47 Michael Masters, Montana Tech  
15:56:04 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
15:57:24 Michael Masters, Montana Tech  
15:58:55 Rep. Bob Carter  
15:59:05 Michael Masters, Montana Tech

**PROVISIONAL DRAFT LEGISLATION – PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
RESTRUCTURING**

16:00:31 Rep. Bob Carter  
[EXHIBIT 16](#)  
16:02:47 Sen. Gayle Lammers  
(See Exhibit 16)  
06:04:34 Rep. Bob Carter  
16:08:27 Sen. Gayle Lammers

**Public Comment**

16:10:07 Kyle Unruh, Renewable Northwest  
16:11:19 Todd O'Hair, President and CEO, Montana Chamber of Commerce  
16:16:03 Bob Morris, Lance Energy Chair, Montana Montana Tech

**Committee Discussion / Questions**

16:18:23 Rep. Gary Parry  
16:19:42 Rep. Bob Carter  
16:20:51 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
16:22:54 Sen. Gayle Lammers  
16:23:09 Rep. Bob Carter  
16:23:59 Sen. Christopher Pope  
16:26:06 Rep. Bob Carter  
16:27:06 Rep. Gary Parry  
16:27:20 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
16:28:13 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
16:28:24 Sen. Gayle Lammers  
16:29:03 Rep. Gary Parry  
16:29:13 Sen. Gregg Hunter  
16:29:19 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

16:29:56 Griffin Burns, LSD  
16:30:50 Sen. Christopher Pope  
16:31:03 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

**BILL DRAFT WORKSHOP/GENERAL WORK SESSION**

16:31:39 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
16:31:42 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
[EXHIBIT 17](#)  
16:32:11 Jameson Walker, Legal Staff, LSD  
16:32:18 (See Exhibit 17)  
16:34:14 Rep. Gary Parry  
16:34:24 Jameson Walker, LSD  
16:37:54 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
16:38:34 Rep. Gary Parry  
16:39:29 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

**Public Comment**

16:39:47 Jessie Luther  
16:44:19 Jennifer Olsen, Government Affairs Director, Montana League of Cities and Towns  
16:46:36 Amy Grmoljez, Avista

**BILL DRAFT WORKSHOP/GENERAL WORK SESSION**

**Continued**

16:47:55 Rep. Gary Parry  
16:48:23 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
16:48:36 Griffin Burns, LSD  
16:48:55 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
16:49:11 Rep. Gary Parry  
16:49:52 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
16:50:30 Sen. Christopher Pope

**Public Comment**

17:04:39 Mackenna Sellers, Executive Director, Montana Renewable Energy Association

**BILL DRAFT WORKSHOP/GENERAL WORK SESSION**

**Continued**

17:06:12 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
17:06:54 Griffin Burns, LSD  
[EXHIBIT 18](#)

[EXHIBIT 19](#)

17:10:46 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
17:10:57 Rep. Gary Parry  
17:12:00 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
17:12:42 Sen. Gregg Hunter  
17:13:11 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
17:14:13 Mark Lambrecht, Montana Electric Cooperatives Association (MECA)  
17:14:57 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
17:15:06 Griffin Burns, LSD  
17:15:19 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

**Public Comment**

17:16:39 None

**FURTHER INSTRUCTION TO STAFF / OTHER BILL DRAFTING**

17:17:08 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)  
17:18:03 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
17:18:40 Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe  
17:19:50 Griffin Burns, LSD  
17:20:00 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
17:20:49 Griffin Burns, LSD  
17:21:12 Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe  
17:21:18 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
17:22:01 Sen. Christopher Pope  
17:22:16 Griffin Burns, LSD  
17:22:43 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
17:22:57 Griffin Burns, LSD

**Public Comment**

17:23:14 Mark Lambrecht, Montana Electric Cooperatives Association (MECA)  
17:24:07 Griffin Burns, LSD  
17:24:41 Mark Lambrecht, MECA

**FURTHER INSTRUCTION TO STAFF / OTHER BILL DRAFTING**

**Continued**

17:25:17 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov  
17:26:18 Griffin Burns, LSD

**Motion / Vote**

17:26:32 Sen. Gayle Lammers moved to begin drafting a large load cost shift bill.  
Motion passed by acclimation.  
17:27:16 Presiding Officer Daniel Zolnikov

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment: 17:27:77