

MINUTES
MONTANA SENATE
69th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION
COMMITTEE ON (S) EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Call to Order: Chair John Fuller-R, on April 08, 2025 at 2:51 PM, in Room 317

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Sen. John Fuller, Chair (R)
Sen. Sara Novak, Vice Chair (D)
Sen. Russ Tempel, Vice Chair (R)
Sen. Becky Beard (R)
Sen. Daniel Emrich (R)
Sen. John Esp (R)
Sen. Forrest Mandeville (R)
Sen. Theresa Manzella (R)
Sen. Jacinda Morigeau (D)
Sen. Andrea Olsen (D)
Sen. Jeremy Trebas (R)
Sen. Susan Webber (D)

Members Excused: Sen. Sue Vinton (R)
Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy (D)

Staff Present: Jack Eve, Secretary
Pad McCracken, Research Analyst

Audio Committees: These minutes are in outline form only. They provide a list of participants and a record of official action taken by the committee. The link to the audio recording of the meeting is available on the Legislative Branch website.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing & Date Posted:

HB 343 04/03/2025
HB 553 03/28/2025
HB 557 04/03/2025
HB 591 03/28/2025
HB 599 04/03/2025
HB 602 03/28/2025
HB 631 04/03/2025
HB 663 04/03/2025

Executive Action:

HB 255 TO TABLE

HB 381
HB 669 TO TABLE
HB 778
HB 631
HB 663 TO TABLE
HB 591
HB 553
HB 343 TO TABLE

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 255 - Revise online data privacy laws for K-12 pupil records

Motion:

14:52:48 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 255 BE CONCURRED IN.**

14:53:37 Sen. Andrea Olsen

14:54:25 Sen. Daniel Emrich

14:54:59 **Vote:** Motion tied 7 - 7

Motion:

14:56:14 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 255 TO TABLE.**

14:56:24 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 381 - Provide for educational credit for students
volunteering in long term care, nursing home, home care, and child care settings**

Motion:

14:56:36 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 381 BE CONCURRED IN.**

14:56:58 Pad McCracken

14:57:28 Sen. Daniel Emrich

14:58:00 Vice Chair Sara Novak

14:58:54 Pad McCracken

14:59:02 **Vote:** There was no vote taken on this motion.

Motion:

14:59:11 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 381 BE AMENDED
HB0381.001.001.**

14:59:30 Sen. Susan Webber

15:00:50 Sen. John Esp

15:01:09 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Motion:

- 15:01:16 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 381 BE CONCURRED IN AS AMENDED.**
- 15:01:54 **Vote:** Motion carried 10 - 4 in the Senate with Sen. Emrich, Sen. Esp, Sen. Mandeville, Sen. Manzella, voting no.
- 15:01:16 **Carrier Assigned:** Sen. Jacinda Morigeau

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 669 - Revise laws related to educating children receiving in-state inpatient treatment of serious emotional disturbances

Motion:

- 15:03:13 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 669 BE CONCURRED IN.**
- 15:04:08 Vice Chair Sara Novak
- 15:06:18 Chair John Fuller
- 15:06:22 **Vote:** Motion failed 11 - 3 in the Senate with Sen. Olsen, Sen. Tempel, Sen. Trebas, voting yes.

Motion:

- 15:07:16 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 669 TO TABLE.**
- 15:07:23 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 778 - Generally revise laws related to homeschooling

Motion:

- 15:07:50 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 778 BE CONCURRED IN.**
- 15:08:11 Sen. Becky Beard
- 15:08:20 Vice Chair Sara Novak
- 15:09:20 **Vote:** Motion carried 12 - 2 in the Senate with Sen. Morigeau, Sen. Webber, voting no.
- 15:07:50 **Carrier Assigned:** Sen. Daniel Emrich

HEARING ON HB 553 - Generally revise military higher education act

Opening Statement:

15:11:43 Rep. George Nikolakakos (R), HD 22, opening statement on HB 553,
Generally revise military higher education act.

Proponent Testimony:

15:13:29 Brig. Gen. Renea Dorvall, Montana Department of Military Affairs - MDMA

15:16:05 1st Sgt. Dennis Stoner, Self

15:17:22 Hope Morrison, Associated Students of the University of Montana - ASUM

Opponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

15:18:45 Lt. Col. Todd Wayne, Montana National Guard - MNG

Questions from Committee:

15:19:26 Sen. Becky Beard

15:19:39 Rep. George Nikolakakos

Closing Statement:

15:20:04 Rep. George Nikolakakos (R), HD 22, closing statement on HB 553.

HEARING ON HB 591 - Institute the celebrate freedom week in Montana's public schools

Opening Statement:

15:21:05 Rep. Greg Oblander (R), HD 38, opening statement on HB 591, Institute
the celebrate freedom week in Montana's public schools.

Proponent Testimony:

15:23:51 Lance Melton, Montana School Boards Association - MSBA

15:24:55 Katie Bloodgood, Office of Public Instruction - OPI

15:26:09 Chris Averill, Self

15:27:17 Anna Shchemelinin, Self

Opponent Testimony:

15:29:29 Don Cape, Coalition for Safety and Justice - CFSJ

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

15:32:06 Sen. Susan Webber

15:32:57 Rep. Greg Oblander

15:34:46 Sen. Andrea Olsen

15:36:35 Rep. Greg Oblander

15:37:35 Sen. Becky Beard

15:38:03 Rep. Greg Oblander

15:38:28 Sen. Susan Webber

15:38:54 Chair John Fuller

Closing Statement:

15:39:29 Rep. Greg Oblander (R), HD 38, closing statement on HB 591.

HEARING ON HB 602 - Require school district personnel to inform board of trustees of reductions in force

Opening Statement:

15:40:21 Rep. Greg Overstreet (R), HD 88, opening statement on HB 602, Require school district personnel to inform board of trustees of reductions in force.

Proponent Testimony:

15:43:57 Lance Melton, MSBA

Opponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

15:45:23 Sen. Theresa Manzella

15:46:08 Rep. Greg Overstreet

15:46:40 Sen. Susan Webber

15:47:01 Rep. Greg Overstreet

Closing Statement:

15:47:55 Rep. Greg Overstreet (R), HD 88, closing statement on HB 602.

HEARING ON HB 343 - Require schools to provide religious instruction released time program

Opening Statement:

15:48:29 Rep. Randyn Gregg (R), HD 78, opening statement on HB 343, Require schools to provide religious instruction released time program.

Proponent Testimony:

15:52:07 Bill Lussenheide, Self

15:53:39 Doug Reisig, Montana Quality Education Coalition - MQEC

15:55:16 Derek Oestreicher, Montana Family Foundation - MFF

15:57:39 Steve White, Self

15:58:11 Jesse Vohwinkel, Self

16:00:53 Greg Chafuen, Alliance Defending Freedom - ADF

Opponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

16:03:20 McCall Flynn, Executive Director, Board of Public Education - BPE

Questions from Committee:

16:03:50 Sen. Theresa Manzella

16:04:24 Rep. Randyn Gregg
16:04:52 Sen. Andrea Olsen
16:05:48 McCall Flynn, BPE
16:07:41 Vice Chair Sara Novak
16:08:35 Lance Melton, MSBA
16:10:49 Chair John Fuller
16:10:56 Sen. Susan Webber
16:12:18 Rep. Randyn Gregg
16:12:55 Lance Melton - MSBA
16:14:55 Chair John Fuller

Closing Statement:

16:15:15 Rep. Randyn Gregg (R), HD 78, closing statement on HB 343.

HEARING ON HB 599 - Revise student data collection laws

Opening Statement:

16:16:49 Rep. Melissa Nikolakakos (R), HD 20, opening statement on HB 599, Revise student data collection laws.

Proponent Testimony:

16:22:31 Rob Watson, School Administrators of Montana - SAM

16:23:54 Beth Price Morrison, Self

Opponent Testimony:

16:25:14 Don Cape, CFSJ

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

16:27:44 Sen. Jacinda Morigeau
16:28:04 Rep. Melissa Nikolakakos
16:29:46 Sen. Becky Beard
16:31:10 Rep. Melissa Nikolakakos
16:33:13 Sen. Daniel Emrich
16:33:43 Rep. Melissa Nikolakakos
16:35:36 Rob Watson, SAM

Closing Statement:

16:36:37 Rep. Melissa Nikolakakos (R), HD 20, closing statement on HB 599.

HEARING ON HB 557 - Revise education laws related to PIR days and meetings of teacher organizations

Opening Statement:

16:38:51 Rep. Jodee Etchart (R), HD 51, opening statement on HB 557, Revise education laws related to PIR days and meetings of teacher organizations.

Proponent Testimony:

16:40:43 Maxford Nelsen, Freedom Foundation - FF: EXHIBIT - <https://docs.legmt.gov/download-ticket?ticketId=eae910c6-15f6-43b4-ae7c-e0adf54728fb>
16:43:44 Finley Warden, Self: EXHIBIT - <https://docs.legmt.gov/download-ticket?ticketId=2f9898e2-7cff-4ca6-b350-44f9c0eaf269>
16:46:24 Derek Oestreicher, MFF
16:48:52 Emilia Gilsdorf, FGA Action - FGAA
16:49:40 Katie Bloodgood, OPI

Opponent Testimony:

16:51:36 Patrick Yawakie, Blackfeet Tribe

Informational Witness Testimony:

16:54:03 Kim Popham, Montana Federation of Public Employees - MFPE

16:54:51 McCall Flynn, BPE

Questions from Committee:

16:55:16 Sen. Jacinda Morigeau

16:55:55 Kim Popham, MFPE: EXHIBIT - <https://docs.legmt.gov/download-ticket?ticketId=50ae0732-4397-47b1-b26b-8758bccf6fb9>

16:56:06 Sen. Andrea Olsen

16:56:30 Kim Popham, MFPE

17:00:00 Sen. Theresa Manzella

17:01:13 McCall Flynn, BPE

17:02:57 Sen. Theresa Manzella

17:03:18 Finley Warden, Self

17:03:39 Sen. John Esp

17:04:05 Kim Popham, MFPE

17:05:40 Sen. Forrest Mandeville

17:06:19 Kim Popham, MFPE

17:07:44 Sen. Jacinda Morigeau

17:08:19 Kim Popham. MFPE

17:08:34 Chair John Fuller

17:09:10 Maxford Nelson, FF

Closing Statement:

17:09:59 Rep. Jodee Etchart (R), HD 51, closing statement on HB 557.

HEARING ON HB 663 - Revise education laws related to diversity, equity, and inclusion

Opening Statement:

17:12:37 Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe (R), HD 39, opening statement on HB 663, Revise education laws related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Proponent Testimony:

17:15:30 Anna Shchemelinin, Self

Opponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

17:18:27 Sen. Daniel Emrich

17:18:52 Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe

17:20:07 Sen. Susan Webber

17:20:36 Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe

Closing Statement:

17:21:49 Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe (R), HD 39, closing statement on HB 663.

HEARING ON HB 631 - Revise student online protection laws related to postsecondary opportunities

Opening Statement:

17:23:41 Rep. Curtis Schomer (R), HD 48, opening statement on HB 631, Revise student online protection laws related to postsecondary opportunities.

Proponent Testimony:

17:25:15 Lance Melton, MSBA

17:26:52 Rep. Eric Albus, Self

Opponent Testimony:

None

Informational Witness Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee:

17:27:42 Sen. Jacinda Morigeau

17:28:09 Rep. Curtis Schomer

Closing Statement:

17:28:20 Rep. Curtis Schomer (R), HD 48, closing statement on HB 631.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 631 - Revise student online protection laws related to postsecondary opportunities

Motion:

17:29:51 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 631 BE CONCURRED IN.**

17:34:19 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

17:29:51 **Carrier Assigned:** Sen. Russ Tempel

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 663 - Revise education laws related to diversity, equity, and inclusion

Motion:

17:30:07 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 663 BE CONCURRED IN.**

17:30:14 **Vote:** Motion tied 7 - 7

Motion:

17:33:21 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 663 TO TABLE.**

17:33:38 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 591 - Institute the celebrate freedom week in Montana's public schools

Motion:

17:33:27 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 591 BE CONCURRED IN.**

17:35:14 **Vote:** Motion carried 9 - 5 in the Senate with Sen. Morigeau, Sen. Novak, Sen. Olsen, Sen. Webber, Sen. Windy Boy, voting no.
Sen. Windy Boy, By Proxy

17:33:27 **Carrier Assigned:** Sen. John Fuller

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 553 - Generally revise military higher education act

Motion:

17:36:30 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 553 BE CONCURRED IN.**

17:36:59 Sen. Jacinda Morigeau

17:37:23 Sen. Andrea Olsen

17:38:35 **Vote:** Motion carried 11 - 3 in the Senate with Sen. Esp, Sen. Olsen, Sen. Webber, voting no.

17:36:30 **Carrier Assigned:** Sen. Russ Tempel

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 343 - Require schools to provide religious instruction released time program

Motion:

17:40:14 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 343 BE CONCURRED IN.**

17:40:41 Vice Chair Russ Tempel

17:40:54 Chair John Fuller

17:41:13 Sen. Andrea Olsen

Motion:

17:42:36 Sen. Andrea Olsen moved that **HB 343 BE AMENDED.**

17:43:59 Sen. Daniel Emrich

17:44:24 **Vote:** Motion failed 13 - 1 in the Senate with Sen. Olsen, voting yes.

Motion:

17:45:22 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 343 BE CONCURRED IN.**

17:45:24 **Vote:** Motion tied 7 - 7

Motion:

17:46:19 Vice Chair Russ Tempel moved that **HB 343 TO TABLE.**

17:46:32

Vote: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 17:46:48

Secretary: Jack Eve

Additional Documents:

Proxies - <https://docs.legmt.gov/download-ticket?ticketId=c133a6ec-f588-40da-9acc-795ca327768a>

Visitors List - <https://docs.legmt.gov/download-ticket?ticketId=66dd6b5c-a613-486f-b8aa-b40209416fd3>