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NEWS FROM THE MONTANA LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

For immediate release

Aug. 4, 2010

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Public Asked to Weigh In on Energy, Communications Proposals

The Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee of the Montana Legislature is seeking public comment through Aug. 25 on four draft bills that it's thinking of taking to the 2011 session.

The bipartisan committee also would like public comment on a draft letter that it's considering sending to the Federal Communications Committee. The letter addresses proposed federal reforms that the committee believes may put investments in rural broadband telecommunications services at risk.

Copies of the bill drafts and the letter are available on the committee Web site at www.leg.mt.gov/etic. Click on the Sept. 10 meeting date under "Meeting Schedule and Materials."

The four legislative proposals are:

- LC 6001: To modify the process for reviewing the state energy policy
- LC 6002: To increase Montana's renewable portfolio standard
- LC 6003: To revise the definition of "eligible renewable resource" to include expansion of hydroelectric facilities
- LC 6004: To extend the availability of funding for wireless 9-1-1 communications from 2011 to 2015

The committee will meet Sept. 10 in Helena to review the feedback it gets and take additional public comment. Members will decide at the meeting whether to move forward with the four bill drafts. More information about the meeting will be posted when available at www.leg.mt.gov.

Comments should be directed to Sonja Nowakowski, committee staff, at snowakowski@mt.gov or to Legislative Environmental Policy Office, Attn. Sonja Nowakowski, P.O. Box 201704, Helena, MT 59620-1704.

For more information, contact Nowakowski at 406-444-3078