



## Newsletter

### In This Issue

Interim Newsletter Resumes Publication.....	1
Legislators May Claim Reimbursement for Interim Activities .....	2
Legislative Committee Assignments .....	3
Legislative Audit Committee .....	5
Legislative Finance Committee .....	5
Legislative Council.....	6
State-Tribal Relations Committee .....	7
Education and Local Government Committee	7
Water Policy Committee.....	8
Revenue & Transportation Committee.....	8
Economic Affairs Committee.....	9
Energy & Telecommunications Committee ....	9
Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Committee.....	10
State Administration & Veterans' Affairs Committee .....	10
Law and Justice Committee.....	11
Districting & Apportionment Committee ....	12
Environmental Quality Council.....	12
The Back Page: An Overview of 2013-14 Interim Studies and Activities .....	13

### Interim Newsletter Resumes Publication

The publication of the Montana Legislative Branch newsletter resumes with this issue of The Interim and continues each month through December 2014. This interim, the newsletter is being published only in an electronic format, which includes links to interim committee web pages. These links will provide direct access to interim committee and other legislative information, including meeting schedules, agendas, reports, and staff contacts.

The newsletter will contain regular reports on the activities of interim committees, as well as the Legislative Council, the Environmental Quality Council, the Legislative Finance Committee, and the Legislative Audit Committee.

The interim committees staffed by the Legislative Services Division are the:

- Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Committee;
- Economic Affairs Committee;
- Education and Local Government Committee;
- Energy and Telecommunications Committee;
- Law and Justice Committee;
- Revenue and Transportation Committee;
- State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Committee;
- State-Tribal Relations Committee; and
- Water Policy Committee.

These committees conduct interim studies as assigned by the Legislative Council or as may be determined by a particular committee. The committees are also responsible for state agency monitoring and administrative rule review. They may also recommend legislative changes to improve the operation of a state agency within a committee's jurisdiction. The public is encouraged to participate in the activities of interim committees.

On pages 3-5 of this issue is a list of the memberships of the interim and permanent committees described above, as well as the legislative membership of other committees, councils, boards, and panels on which legislators serve.

### Taking a Closer Look

A regular feature of The Interim is the “Back Page,” which presents an in-depth analysis each month on a topic of importance to Montanans. Topics typically include public education, taxation and budgeting, health care, economic development, energy, natural resources, climate change, transportation, and water policy. Articles also may focus on topics of professional interest to staff and other themes. This month’s article discusses the assignment of interim studies to the various committees (p. 13)

### Calendar

The legislative website features a new calendar function that will provide up-to-date information on committee meetings and other legislative activities. This calendar will replace the calendar that was published as part of the newsletter in previous interims. [Click here to view the interim calendar.](#)

Interim committees sometimes need to change meeting dates in response to unforeseen circumstances, and the online calendar will reflect those changes in a more timely manner.

### Sign up for online edition

The newsletter is posted online each month. To receive an e-mail notification when the newsletter is available, simply sign up at [www.leg.mt.gov/css/Lyris/email\\_logon.asp](http://www.leg.mt.gov/css/Lyris/email_logon.asp) by providing your e-mail address and selecting “Interim Newsletter” from the choices on the following page.

The Legislature accommodates individuals with disabilities and will provide a paper copy upon request to those individuals who are unable to access the newsletter electronically.

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions about The Interim, please contact Sue O’Connell at 406-444-3597 or [soconnell@mt.gov](mailto:soconnell@mt.gov).

## Legislators May Claim Reimbursement for Interim Activities

The following provides information for legislators about payment of salary and reimbursement of expenses for interim activities. Legislators who have questions regarding this information should call the Financial & Human Resource Office, Legislative Services Division (Jennifer Simmons at 406-444-9542 or Dawn Hicks at 406-444-3411).

Generally, legislators should use the mode of travel that provides the lowest overall cost to the state. Lodging reservations

should be made early to obtain state-rate rooms; a legislator should always request state employee rates when making reservations. If a legislator uses a commercial airline, reservations should be made early to obtain discounted rates, and costly schedule changes should be avoided.

### Statutory Provisions

Current law provides that legislators may be compensated for their time and travel expenses when the Legislature is not in session, if they are engaged in legislative business with prior authorization of the appropriate funding authority. A legislator is entitled to:

- a mileage allowance as provided in 2-18-503;
- expenses as provided in 2-18-501 and 2-18-502; and
- a salary equal to one full day’s pay at the rate described in 5-2-301(1) for each 24-hour period of time (from midnight to midnight), or portion of a 24-hour period, spent on authorized interim or administrative committee legislative business or as otherwise provided by law. However, if time spent for business other than authorized legislative interim or administrative committee business or business related to 5-11-305 results in lengthening a legislator’s stay away from home into an additional 24-hour period, the legislator may not be compensated for the additional day.

### Reimbursement Rates

Reimbursement rates are currently set at the following levels:

- In-state meals: \$5 for breakfast, \$6 for lunch, and \$12 for dinner;
- Mileage: 56.5 cents per mile for the first 1,000 miles each month and 53.5 cents for each mile after that; and
- Lodging: \$77 per day plus applicable taxes for most Montana locations and \$83 per day plus taxes in Helena, if a receipt is provided, or \$12 per day for lodging when a receipt is not provided because a legislator stayed at a private residence rather than a hotel or motel.

Receipts are not needed in order to be reimbursed for meals or mileage.

### Guidelines for Evaluating Reasonableness of Claims

The following guidelines are used to determine if time spent away from home reasonably falls within the context of authorized legislative business:

1. Overnight lodging is reasonable when a legislator would be required to leave home earlier than 6:30 a.m. or arrive home later than 6:30 p.m. in order to have attended all of the meeting or have conducted all of the authorized legislative business. To compute whether this would be

required, an average travel speed (overall including incidental stops) of 50 miles an hour is used. The one-half hour immediately preceding and immediately following a meeting or activity is an in-town travel shift and considered to be part of the total meeting schedule for the purposes of the reasonableness computation.

2. A legislator is entitled to a day's salary when necessarily away from home for authorized legislative business. A member is considered necessarily away from home on the day of a meeting or other authorized legislative activity and on any other day when travel qualified under No. 1 above is required.
3. A meal falling within reasonable travel times may be claimed.

Special circumstances are considered in determining reasonableness. Such circumstances may include inclement weather, a legislator's health, variables related to flying instead of driving, and schedule conflicts that require a member to choose a more expensive mode of travel in order to participate in the legislative activity. Special circumstances should be clearly presented on the claim form.

### Legislators Who Live in Helena

A legislator who lives in Helena and attends an interim committee meeting in Helena is not entitled to mileage or lodging reimbursement. However, the legislator is entitled to a midday meal allowance on the day of the meeting regardless of the proximity of the meeting place to the individual's residence. In addition, the legislator may claim salary in the same manner as all other legislators.

### How to submit a claim

To receive payment of salary and reimbursement of expenses for interim legislative work, a legislator must complete and sign a Statement of Expense for Montana Legislators. Forms are available from committee secretaries and from the Financial & Human Resource Office, Legislative Services Division, Room 154 in the Capitol.

The legislator must return the claim to the committee secretary or to the Financial & Human Resource Office, Legislative Services Division, accompanied by original receipts as noted on the claim form. The legislator should clearly note the number of days of salary, lodging, and meals claimed. The claim should be completed and signed in ink. Special circumstances that apply to the claim should be noted.

Claims will be processed as quickly as possible. The salary portion of the claim will be paid with the next biweekly state payroll cycle following receipt of the form. Warrants for expenses, not including salary, will be issued within three working days of receipt of the claim by the Financial & Hu-

man Resource Office. This means that a legislator will usually receive two state warrants for each claim submitted, one for expenses and one for salary. Claim forms that are incomplete or do not include required receipts may be returned to the legislator for completion. When that happens, the claims processing period may be extended.

### Timely Submission of Claims

State policy requires that requests for reimbursement of travel costs be submitted within 3 months of incurring the expense or the right to reimbursement is waived. To comply with policy, the Legislative Branch cannot process payment if reimbursement requests are submitted outside the 3-month window.

## Legislative Committee Assignments for the 2013-14 Interim

### Legislative Council

Rep. Mark Blasdel	Sen. Jeff Essmann
Rep. Chuck Hunter	Sen. Jon Sesso
Rep. Bryce Bennett	Sen. Robyn Driscoll
Rep. Margie MacDonald	Sen. Cliff Larsen
Rep. Jesse O'Hara	Sen. Jason Priest
Rep. Gordon Vance	Sen. Chas Vincent

*Staffed by Legislative Services Division*

### Legislative Finance Committee

Rep. Duane Ankney	Sen. Mary Caferro
Rep. Rob Cook	Sen. Llew Jones
Rep. Kimberly Dudik	Sen. Rick Ripley
Rep. Steve Gibson	Sen. Jon Sesso
Rep. Galen Hollenbaugh	Sen. Mitch Tropila
Rep. Pat Noonan	Sen. Ed Walker

*Staffed by the Legislative Fiscal Division*

### Legislative Audit Committee

Rep. Randy Brodehl	Sen. Dee Brown
Rep. Virginia Court	Sen. Taylor Brown
Rep. Mike Cuffe	Sen. Greg Jergeson
Rep. Mary McNally	Sen. Eric Moore
Rep. Ryan Osmundson	Sen. Mitch Tropila
Rep. JP Pomnichowski	Sen. Cliff Larsen

*Staffed by the Legislative Audit Division*

*Legislative committee assignments cont.***Legislative Consumer Committee**

Rep. Mike Cuffe                      Sen. Terry Murphy  
Rep. Pat Noonan                      Sen. Mitch Tropila

*Staffed by the Consumer Counsel***Environmental Quality Council**

Rep. Jerry Bennett                      Sen. John Brenden  
Rep. Virginia Court                      Sen. Jennifer Fielder  
Rep. Ed Lieser                      Sen. Brad Hamlett  
Rep. Bill McChesney                      Sen. Jim Keane  
Rep. Jeff Welborn                      Sen. Rick Ripley  
Rep. Kerry White                      Sen. Gene Vuckovich  
Dexter Busby                      Mary Fitzpatrick  
Scott Aspenleider                      Roy Morris

**Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee**

Rep. Ron Ehli                      Sen. Terry Murphy  
Rep. Jenifer Gursky                      Sen. David Wanzenried  
Rep. Carolyn Pease-Lopez                      Sen. Roger Webb  
Rep. Scott Reichner                      Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy

**Economic Affairs Interim Committee**

Rep. Tom Berry                      Sen. Elsie Arntzen  
Rep. Greg Hertz                      Sen. Dick Barrett  
Rep. Ryan Lynch                      Sen. Tom Facey  
Rep. Lea Whitford                      Sen. Bruce Tutvedt

**Education and Local Government Interim Committee**

Rep. Kris Hansen                      Sen. Tom Facey  
Rep. Donald Jones                      Sen. Dave Lewis  
Rep. Edie McClafferty                      Sen. Eric Moore  
Rep. Jean Price                      Sen. Matt Rosendale  
Rep. Dan Salomon                      Sen. Sharon Stewart-Peregoy  
Rep. Tom Woods                      Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy

**Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee**

Rep. Mike Lang                      Sen. Ed Buttrey  
Rep. Mary McNally                      Sen. Robyn Driscoll  
Rep. Keith Regier                      Sen. Cliff Larsen  
Rep. Tom Steenberg                      Sen. Alan Olson

**Law and Justice Interim Committee**

Rep. Jenny Eck                      Sen. Shannon Augare  
Rep. Ellie Boldman Hill                      Sen. Scott Boulanger  
Rep. Sarah Laszloffy                      Sen. Robyn Driscoll  
Rep. Steve Lavin                      Sen. Larry Jent  
Rep. Dennis Lenz                      Sen. Terry Murphy  
Rep. Margie MacDonald                      Sen. Scott Sales

**Revenue and Transportation Interim Committee**

Rep. Nancy Ballance                      Sen. Dick Barrett  
Rep. Roy Hollandsworth                      Sen. Christine Kaufmann  
Rep. Chuck Hunter                      Sen. Janna Taylor  
Rep. Tom Jacobson                      Sen. Fred Thomas  
Rep. Kelly McCarthy                      Sen. Art Wittich  
Rep. Mike Miller                      Sen. Sue Malek

**State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Interim Committee**

Rep. Bryce Bennett                      Sen. Dee Brown  
Rep. Joanne Blyton                      Sen. Larry Jent  
Rep. Doug Kary                      Sen. Dave Lewis  
Rep. Kathy Swanson                      Sen. Sue Malek

**State-Tribal Relations Committee**

Rep. Clarena Brockie                      Sen. Shannon Augare  
Rep. Frosty Calf Boss Ribs                      Sen. Taylor Brown  
Rep. Alan Doane                      Sen. Bruce Tutvedt  
Rep. Nicholas Schwaderer                      Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy

**Water Policy Committee**

Rep. Pat Connell                      Sen. Jennifer Fielder  
Rep. Steve Fitzpatrick                      Sen. Brad Hamlett  
Rep. Reilly Neill                      Sen. Sharon Stewart-Peregoy  
Rep. Kathleen Williams                      Sen. Chas Vincent

**Board of Investments Legislative Liaison**

Rep. Kelly McCarthy                      Sen. Dave Lewis

**Capitol Complex Advisory Council**

Rep. Liz Bangerter                      Sen. Elsie Arntzen  
Rep. Jean Price                      Sen. Mike Phillips

**Community Health Center Advisory Group**

Rep. Dave Hagstrom  
Rep. Gordon Pierson

**Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund**

Rep. Bridget Smith                      Sen. John Brenden

**Economic Development Advisory Council**

Rep. Edward Greef                      Sen. Ron Arthun  
Rep. Rae Peppers                      Sen. Gene Vuckovich

**Electronic Government Advisory Council**

Rep. Jonathan McNiven                      Sen. Christine Kaufmann

**Future Fisheries Review Panel**

Rep. Ted Washburn

**Gaming Advisory Council**

Rep. Casey Schreiner                      Sen. Jon Sonju

**Information Technology Board**

Rep. David (Doc) Moore

**Land Information Advisory Council**

Rep. Carl Glimm

Sen. Mike Phillips

**Legislative Branch Information Technology Planning**

Rep. Kirk Wagoner

(Senate appt. pending)

Lindsey Grovom, Chief Clerk of the House

Marilyn Miller, Secretary of the Senate

**Pacific Northwest Economic Region**

Rep. Mike Cuffe

Sen. Chas Vincent

Rep. Kathleen Williams

Sen. Cliff Larsen

*Alternates*

Rep. Jeff Welborn

Sen. Jeff Essmann

Rep. Edie McClafferty

Sen. Mike Phillips

**Reserved Water Rights Compact Commission**

Rep. Dan Salomon

Sen. Debby Barrett

Rep. Kathleen Williams

Sen. Dick Barrett

**Workforce Investment Board**

Rep. Brian Hoven

Sen. Edward Buttrey

Rep. Ryan Lynch

Sen. Tom Facey

**Legislative Audit Committee Meets June 13**

The Legislative Audit Committee is meeting June 13 at the Capitol in Helena to review recent audits of state programs and services. Twelve legislators serve on this administrative committee. Current members are Rep. Randy Brodehl, R-Kalispell; Rep. Virginia Court, D-Billings; Rep. Mike Cuffe, R-Eureka; Sen. Dee Brown, R-Hungry Horse; Sen. Taylor Brown, R-Huntley; Sen. Greg Jergeson, D-Chinook; Sen. Cliff Larsen, D-Missoula; Rep. Mary McNally, D-Billings; Sen. Eric Moore, R-Miles City; Rep. Ryan Osmundson, R-Buffalo; Rep. JP Pomnichowski, D-Bozeman; and Sen. Mitch Tropila, D-Great Falls (chairman).

The Legislative Audit Division anticipates reports on the following topics at the June meeting:

**Financial Audits**

Montana State Lottery (12-30)

Montana Water Pollution Control and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Programs (11-25B)

State of Montana (11-01B)

**Financial Compliance Audits**

Public Employees' Retirement Board (12-08A)

Teachers' Retirement System (12-09A)

**Information Systems Audits**

Montana Lottery Security (13DP-01)

**Performance Audits**

Detection and Resolution of Suspected Medicaid Recipient Prescription Fraud and Abuse (12P-12)

School Transportation Funding and Safety (13P-01)

**Audit Follow-ups***Information Systems*

Improving Controls Over Security of Laptop Data

*Performance*

Board of Oil and Gas Conservation Regulatory Program

Improving Montana's Office Supply Acquisition Processes

Inspection and Complaint Activities for Child Care Licensing Program

Water Rights Adjudication

The Legislative Audit Division provides independent and objective evaluations of the stewardship, performance and cost of government policies, programs and operations. The division is responsible for conducting financial, performance, and information system audits of state agencies or their programs, including the university system.

For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee's website or contact Tori Hunthausen, Legislative Auditor. To report improper acts committed by state agencies, departments, or employees, call the division fraud hotline at 800-222-4446 or 406-444-4446 in Helena.

Committee Website: [www.leg.mt.gov/audit](http://www.leg.mt.gov/audit)Committee Staff: [thunthausen@mt.gov](mailto:thunthausen@mt.gov) or 406-444-3122**June Date Set for Legislative Finance Committee**

The Legislative Finance Committee is a permanent, bipartisan committee of the Legislature. During the interim, the committee monitors fiscal activities and programs of state government and oversees the budget analysis and research functions of the Legislative Fiscal Division.

Senate members of the committee this interim are Sen. Mary Caferro, D-Helena; Sen. Llew Jones, R-Conrad; Sen. Rick Ripley, R-Wolf Creek; Sen. Mitch Tropila, D-Great Falls; Sen. Jon Sesso, D-Butte; and Sen. Ed Walker, R-Billings. House members are Rep. Duane Ankney, R-Colstrip; Rep. Rob Cook, R-Conrad; Rep. Kimberly Dudik, D-Missoula; Rep.

Steve Gibson, R-East Helena; Rep. Galen Hollenbaugh, D-Helena; and Rep. Pat Noonan, D-Ramsay.

Committee members will meet June 11-12. The agenda and meeting reports will be available on the Legislative Fiscal Division website. The tentative agenda includes the following items:

- election of committee officers;
- discussion of committee rules and options;
- an overview of the role and authority of the committee and the role of the Legislative Fiscal Division;
- an update on The Legislative Fiscal Report: 2015 Biennium;
- routine committee reports (operating reports, budget amendments, required reports); and
- discussion of a proposed Legislative Fiscal Division work plan for the interim.

The Legislative Fiscal Report: 2015 Biennium will be available in June after completion of the legislative polling process. The report documents the legislative budget and revenue decisions made during the 2013 legislative session. In addition, the report includes an analysis of state agency budgets as well as an analysis of revenue estimates and legislation affecting state revenue. The fiscal report will include:

- statewide perspectives (budget overview);
- revenue estimates; and
- agency budgets.

This publication serves as a historical record of the fiscal decisions made during the 2013 legislative session. The information included in the fiscal report provides legislators with a detailed budget reference tool. Printed copies of the fiscal report will be available in limited quantities. However, it will be available online at [www.leg.mt.gov/FR-fbp.asp](http://www.leg.mt.gov/FR-fbp.asp).

### Next Meeting

For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee's website or contact Diane McDuffie, committee secretary at 406-444-2063.

Committee Website: [www.leg.mt.gov/fiscal](http://www.leg.mt.gov/fiscal)

Committee Staff: [acarlson@mt.gov](mailto:acarlson@mt.gov) or 406-444-2988

## Legislative Council Assigns 17 Studies in First Interim Meeting

At its May 16 meeting, the Legislative Council elected Senate President Jeff Essmann, R-Billings, as the presiding officer and House Minority Leader Chuck Hunter, D-Helena, as the vice presiding officer. Other Legislative Council members are Rep. Mark Blasdel, R-Somers, Speaker of the House; Sen. Jon Sesso, D-Butte, Senate Minority Leader; Rep. Bryce Bennett, D-Missoula; Rep. Margie MacDonald, D-Billings; Rep. Jesse O'Hara, R-Great Falls; Rep. Gordon Vance, R-Bozeman; Sen. Robyn Driscoll, D-Billings; Sen. Cliff Larsen, D-Missoula; Sen. Jason Priest, R-Red Lodge; and Sen. Chas Vincent, R-Libby.

### Studies Assigned

The council also assigned to various committees 16 of the 17 interim studies approved by the 2013 Legislature. The 17th study, House Joint Resolution 30, an interim study on veterans' benefits, will be a multi-staff effort compiling information on all veterans', military personnel on active duty, and National Guard benefits to be presented to all of the relevant interim committees. In addition, study bill House Bill 609, an interim study on hunting and fishing licensing, was assigned to the Environmental Quality Council.

### Veto Polls, Fires May Affect General Fund Status

Amy Carlson, Legislative Fiscal Analyst, provided information regarding the general fund status sheet and discussed the variables that were still outstanding, especially veto polling and the funds dedicated for fires. As soon as the veto polling is completed on June 10, a final general fund status sheet will be prepared by the Legislative Fiscal Division.

The council adopted the Legislative Services Division 2015 Biennium Operating Budget, and also adopted an operating plan change in the 2013 biennium budget for information technology equipment.

### NCSL, CSG Appointments

The council also made appointments to the policy committee of interstate organizations to which the Montana Legislature belongs: National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and Council of State Governments - West (CSG) committees. Membership does not guarantee participation in meetings, but provides opportunities to receive policy-specific information year round. The appointments have been posted to the Announcements section of the council's website and may be viewed by clicking on the NCSL and CSG links for the respective lists.

NCSL policy committees provide guidance for state-federal activities, meet three times a year, and are staffed by the NCSL staff. The staff produce various documents related to

both state and federal matters, including research and analysis on federal and state issues, action and information alerts, legislative summaries, side-by-side charts, 50-state surveys and committee e-mail listservs. Committees develop the official policy directives and resolutions that determine NCSL positions on the wide range of federal actions that affect the states. In addition, these committees are fertile venues for sharing ideas about policy and legislative management innovations in state legislatures. The committees are made up of legislators and legislative staff from the 50 states and the territories.

For CSG, the committees facilitate the exchange of information, disseminate research, and provide opportunities for lawmakers to discuss and advocate policy issues of relevance to Western states. Through regional policy committees and policy forums, as well as CSG's national policy and research team, legislators have unique policy session opportunities and information aimed at assisting them make informed decisions. CSG-WEST policy committees offer opportunities for legislators to learn from the experiences and expertise of other states as well as hear from nationally recognized experts in particular subject matters. Policy committees can recommend resolutions and policy positions for the consideration of the CSG-WEST Executive Committee.

### Next Meeting

The council's next meeting will be Aug. 22-23 for the traditional biennial strategic planning session. The council will likely meet in the Capitol Building for a short business session and then will reconvene off campus to hold a strategic planning session. The council and management staff meet to discuss their priorities for the Legislature as an institution and improvements they want to make, in keeping with the Legislative Council's mission to provide ongoing leadership, direction, and foresight for the efficient operation and improvement of the Legislative Branch; to establish personnel and pay policies in order to maintain professional and highly motivated employees; to educate the public about the Legislature and foster public participation in the legislative process; and to preserve the integrity of the Legislature as an equal branch of government.

For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee's website or contact Susan Byorth Fox, committee staff.

Committee Website: [www.leg.mt.gov/legcouncil](http://www.leg.mt.gov/legcouncil)  
Committee Staff: [sfox@mt.gov](mailto:sfox@mt.gov) or 406-444-3066

## Committee to Hear Topics of Importance to Indian Country

The State-Tribal Relations Interim Committee is tentatively scheduled to hold its first meeting on June 26 in Room 137 of the Capitol.

This organizational meeting will convene with a call to order by Acting Chairman Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy, D-Box Elder, and introductions. Following a welcome ceremony, members will elect officers for the interim. Staff will then give an overview of committee responsibilities and guidelines.

The meeting will include presentations on topics of importance in Indian Country, some at the request of committee members and others at the suggestion of staff. The committee will also consider and decide upon aspects of its interim work plan including priority of issues, calendar of meetings, and choice of possible visits to reservations.

Public comment on any matter under the State-Tribal Relations Interim Committee purview also will be heard.

For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting and to verify meeting dates, visit the committee's website or contact Casey Barrs, committee staff.

Committee Website: [www.leg.mt.gov/tribal](http://www.leg.mt.gov/tribal)

Committee Staff: [cbarrs@mt.gov](mailto:cbarrs@mt.gov) or 406-444-3957

## Education Committee to Examine School Records Management

The Education and Local Government Interim Committee will look at the ways school districts, cities, towns, counties, and the state manage electronic records this interim. Additionally ELG has a long list of statutorily mandated duties including "encouraging cooperation between the legislative and executive branches and the Board of Regents" and "promoting concise, consistent, and uniform regulation for local government." The committee also reviews any proposed changes to the standards of accreditation for K-12 education. With the implementation of Senate Bill 175 and the ongoing impacts to schools and local governments caused by local economic and demographic changes, ELG will have plenty to examine this interim.

### HJR 2 Focuses on Efficiency, Transparency, Accessibility

The Legislative Council designated ELG to conduct the study requested by House Joint Resolution 2 related to electronic records management by state and local government. HJR 2 was requested by last interim's Select Committee on Efficiency in Government after identifying potential gains in efficiency, transparency, and accessibility that emerging information

technologies might afford in the arena of electronic records management. This study will require ELG to gather information and assess the needs and resources of local governments and investigate strategies for more efficient electronic records management with the Office of the Secretary of State and with the Department of Administration's Information Technology Services Division.

### Statutory Duties

Section 5-5-224, MCA contains most of ELG's specific statutory duties. This section requires the committee to act as the Legislature's liaison with local governments and to monitor the activities of the Office of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education, the Board of Public Education, the Board of Regents of Higher Education, and entities administratively attached to those agencies. In addition, 20-7-101, MCA, requires ELG's involvement in standards of accreditation adopted by the Board of Public Education and 82-2-701, MCA, requires reporting to ELG by the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology if the bureau conducts an investigation of sand and gravel deposits where conflicts between development and sand and gravel operations are likely to exist.

### Membership

House members of the Education and Local Government Interim Committee are Reps. Kristin Hansen, R-Havre; Donald Jones, R-Billings; Edie McClafferty, D-Butte; Jean Price, D-Great Falls; Dan Salomon, R-Ronan; and Tom Woods, D-Bozeman. Senate members are Sens. Tom Facey, D-Missoula; Dave Lewis, R-Helena; Eric Moore, R-Miles City; Matt Rosendale, R-Glendive; Sharon Stewart-Peregoy, D-Crow Agency; and Jonathan Windy Boy, D-Box Elder. As senior senator, Lewis will serve as presiding officer at the organizational meeting.

### For More Information

Education and Local Government will meet at 10 a.m. on June 24 in Room 137 of the Capitol. For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee's website or contact Pad McCracken, committee staff.

Committee Website: [www.leg.mt.gov/elgic](http://www.leg.mt.gov/elgic)

Committee Staff: [padmccracken@mt.gov](mailto:padmccracken@mt.gov) or 406-444-3595

## Water Policy Committee to Face Ditch Easement Issue

A study on irrigation ditch realignment and member issues are the expected to comprise the workload for the Water Policy Interim Committee during the 2013-14 interim. The WPIC tentatively meets June 17-18 for its first, organizational meeting.

The 2013 Legislature passed House Joint Resolution 26, which directs the committee to examine the intersection of interests of estate owners and ditch owners over the subject of ditch locations. This study sprang from a defeated bill that would have allowed landowners with a ditch easement running through their property to relocate a ditch with certain conditions.

The committee does not directly oversee any state agencies, but has jurisdiction to study water issues and coordinates with the Environmental Quality Council on water-related topics. The committee also receives water-related briefings from the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), the Department of Environmental Quality, and the Montana Water Court. The 2013 Legislature required a new briefing when it passed House Bill 37, which asks the DNRC to report annually on temporary leases of appropriation rights.

Returning WPIC members are Sens. Bradley Maxon Hamlett, D-Cascade; Sharon Stewart-Peregoy, D-Crow Agency; and Chas Vincent, R-Libby; and Rep. Pat Connell, R-Hamilton. New members are Sen. Jennifer Fielder, R-Thompson Falls; and Reps. Steve Fitzpatrick, R-Great Falls; Reilly Neill, D-Livingston; and Kathleen Williams, D-Bozeman.

### Next Meeting

For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee's website or contact Jason Mohr, committee staff.

Committee website: [www.leg.mt.gov/water](http://www.leg.mt.gov/water)

Committee staff: [jasonmohr@mt.gov](mailto:jasonmohr@mt.gov) or 406-444-1640

## RTIC to Study Taxpayer Appeal Process, Transportation of Oversize Loads

The Revenue and Transportation Interim Committee will meet June 27 in Helena. The primary purpose of the meeting is to elect officers, review a draft work plan and interim study plans, and adopt a meeting schedule for the rest of the interim. The meeting will take place in Room 137 at a time to be determined.

The committee monitors the activities and rulemaking of the departments of Revenue and Transportation, conducts interim studies as assigned, monitors revenue collections, and develops the initial revenue estimates for the next legislative session.

The Legislative Council assigned two interim studies to the committee:

- Senate Joint Resolution 23 is a study of the taxpayer appeals process and options for streamlining and improvement; and
- Senate Joint Resolution 26 calls for a study of transporting oversize loads through Montana.

House members on the committee are Reps. Nancy Ballance, R-Hamilton; Roy Hollandsworth, R-Brady; Chuck Hunter, D-Helena; Tom Jacobson, D-Great Falls; Kelly McCarthy, D-Billings; and Mike Miller, R-Helmville. Senate members are Sens. Dick Barrett, D-Missoula; Christine Kaufmann, D-Helena; Sue Malek, D-Missoula; Janna Taylor, R-Dayton; Fred Thomas, R-Stevensville; and Art Wittich, R-Bozeman.

For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee's website or contact Megan Moore, committee staff.

Committee Website: [www.leg.mt.gov/rtic](http://www.leg.mt.gov/rtic)

Committee Staff: [memoore@mt.gov](mailto:memoore@mt.gov) or 406-444-4496

## Economic Affairs Committee to Work on Worker's Comp, Licensing Board Studies

At the Economic Affairs Committee's first meeting for the 2013-2014 interim, the members will elect officers and discuss the committee's overall work plan as well as study plans assigned to the committee by Legislative Council. The committee also will receive an update on the work done last interim to review professional and occupational licensing boards and will determine the approach for the remaining boards that have not yet undergone a sunset review on whether they remain necessary, which was a requirement of House Bill 525 enacted in the 2011 session.

The committee will convene at 10 a.m. on June 25 in Room 137 of the Capitol, with Sen. Bruce Tutvedt, R-Kalispell, the senior senator on the committee, presiding until election of officers.

Committee members are: Sen. Elsie Artnzen, R-Billings; Sen. Dick Barrett, D-Missoula; Sen. Tom Facey, D-Missoula; Sen. Bruce Tutvedt, R-Kalispell; Rep. Tom Berry, R-Roundup; Rep. Greg Hertz, R-Polson; Rep. Ryan Lynch, D-Butte; Rep. Lea Whitford, D-Cut Bank.

Of the two studies assigned by Legislative Council, House Joint Resolution 25 is expected to be the most time-consuming. The resolution outlines a study of subrogation, the workers' compensation court, changes to medical treatments that occurred under House Bill 334 in the 2011 session, and worker safety, among other issues. Subrogation allows a workers' compensation insurer to make a claim against a third party that may have been responsible for a worker's injuries;

however, the conditions for that claim, including that the worker be made whole for the injuries, are one focus of the study. The second assigned study, Senate Joint Resolution 24, builds on the committee's reviews of professional and occupational licensing boards, which are required to report to the committee on how they are using military training in lieu of certain training requirements. The study also asks the committee to identify other certifications or licensing for which military experience may be relevant and an acceptable equivalent.

Finishing the sunset reviews of 17 licensing boards required under HB 525 also is expected to keep the committee busy, based on the amount of time the committee chooses to devote to the reviews. Last interim, the committee reviewed 16 licensing boards and voted to retain all of them. Some boards that were small or controversial may be back again, depending on the study plan.

The committee's monitoring duties cover various industries, labor, and related topics. Agencies under committee purview are: the departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Labor and Industry, and Livestock, plus the State Auditor's Office, the Governor's Office of Economic Development, the Division of Banking and Financial Services, and the Montana State Fund.

### Next Meeting

For more information on the committee's activities and the June 25 meeting, visit the committee's website or contact Pat Murdo, committee staff.

Committee Website: [www.leg.mt.gov/eaic](http://www.leg.mt.gov/eaic)

Committee Staff: [pmurdo@mt.gov](mailto:pmurdo@mt.gov) or 406-444-3594

## Renewable Power Study in Energy Committee's Sights

The Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee meets June 21 at 9 a.m. in Room 172 of the Capitol.

At the meeting, committee members will adopt a draft work plan, mapping out their work for the interim, and elect a presiding officer and vice-presiding officer. Members also will hear from the Public Service Commission (PSC) on recent rulemaking efforts related to qualifying small power production facilities and the disclosure of regulated utility executives' salaries.

During the legislative interim, the ETIC typically focuses on study topics it has been assigned, while also maintaining oversight of programs and rulemaking activities of the Department of Public Service Regulation and the PSC. It also may address issues and improve law as it deems to be in the best interest of the state.

Following the close of the 2013 legislative session, the Legislative Council assigned the ETIC Senate Joint Resolution 6, a study of the Montana Renewable Power Production and Rural Economic Development Act. Since 2008, the Montana Renewable Power Production and Rural Economic Development Act required certain utilities to procure a percentage of their resources from renewable resources. The ETIC will focus on the economic impacts of the renewable portfolio standard, the environmental benefits of the renewable portfolio standard, and the impacts the renewable portfolio standard has had on Montana consumers.

Members of the Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee are Sen. Ed Buttrey, R-Great Falls; Sen. Robyn Driscoll, D-Billings; Rep. Mike Lang, R-Malta; Sen. Cliff Larsen, D-Missoula; Rep. Mary McNally, D-Billings; Sen. Alan Olson, R-Roundup; Rep. Keith Regier, R-Kalispell; and Rep. Tom Steenberg, D-Missoula.

### Next Meeting

For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee's website or contact Sonja Nowakowski, committee staff.

Committee Website: [www.leg.mt.gov/etic](http://www.leg.mt.gov/etic)

Committee Staff: [snowakowski@mt.gov](mailto:snowakowski@mt.gov) or 406-444-3597

### Institution, Prescription Drug Studies on Tap for CFHHS

The Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee will meet June 25 to chart its course for the 2013-2014 interim.

The committee's work plan will include the House Joint Resolution 16 study of state-operated institutions and the Senate Joint Resolution 20 study of ways to reduce prescription drug abuse. In addition, the committee will monitor activities of the Department of Public Health and Human Services and keep tabs on other topics related to health and human services.

The Legislative Council in May assigned the two studies to the committee.

HJ 16 calls for a study of state institutions providing services to individuals with mental illness, intellectual disabilities, and substance abuse disorders. It ranked fifth out of 17 interim study in the post-session poll of legislators.

SJ 20, the study of prescription drug abuse, ranked seventh among the studies.

The committee will review and act on draft study plans for each of the studies at its organizational meeting. Members also will elect officers and decide how to divide the committee's time among the assigned studies and other duties.

The committee will meet at 10 a.m. in Room 137 of the Capitol.

### Committee Membership

House members are Ron Ehli, R-Hamilton; Jennifer Gursky, D-Missoula; Carolyn Pease-Lopez, D-Billings; and Scott Reichner, R-Bigfork. Senate members are Terry Murphy, R-Cardwell; Dave Wanzenried, D-Missoula; Roger Webb, R-Billings; and Jonathan Windy Boy, D-Box Elder.

People interested in following the committee's activities may sign up for electronic notification of committee meetings and activities at [http://leg.mt.gov/css/Lyris/email\\_logon.asp](http://leg.mt.gov/css/Lyris/email_logon.asp).

### Next Meeting

For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee's website or contact Sue O'Connell, committee staff.

Committee Website: [www.leg.mt.gov/cfhhs](http://www.leg.mt.gov/cfhhs)

Committee Staff: [soconnell@mt.gov](mailto:soconnell@mt.gov) or 406-444-3597

### Members, Studies Assigned to State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Panel

Legislative leadership appointed the following members to the State Administration and Veteran Affairs' Committee for the 2013-14 interim: Sen. Dee Brown, R-Hungry Horse; Sen. Larry Jent, D-Bozeman; Sen. Dave Lewis, R-Helena; Sen. Sue Malek, D-Missoula; Rep. Bryce Bennett, D-Missoula; Rep. Joanne Blyton, R-Joliet; Rep. Doug Kary, R-Billings; Rep. Kathy Swanson, D-Anaconda. The Legislative Council also assigned two studies to the committee.

#### House Joint Resolution 1 - Study of the Office of Commissioner of Political Practices

This study resolution requests that the committee examine:

- the process for selecting a commissioner of political practices;
- the structure, composition, and duties of the Office of Commissioner of Political Practices; and
- the enforcement authority of the Office of Commissioner of Political Practices, including options for ensuring more immediate consequences for violating campaign laws.

The study is to include a review of practices in other states, analysis of options, consideration of stakeholder concerns,

and the development of recommendations to improve confidence in the integrity, objectivity, and capabilities of the Office of Commissioner of Political Practices.

### **Senate Joint Resolution 14 - Study Combining Primary and School Elections**

The preamble of the study resolution mentions that Senate Bill 140 from the 2013 session was tabled in the Senate Local Government Committee after that committee agreed to request a study resolution aimed at identifying how to make combining local and school elections feasible.

Under the resolution, the committee is asked to:

- examine existing dates, deadlines, and other procedures in Montana law that would require adjustment in order to conduct combined elections;
- examine changes that election administrators would need to implement to combine primary and school elections, including accommodating various administrative boundaries for jurisdictions holding elections, such as state, legislative, county, school district, city, and other district elections, and reducing voter confusion about these boundaries; administering the technical elements of combined elections, including the effects on overseas and military voters, different poll locations and opening and closing times, and which local government authority is responsible for election costs; and determining the responsibility for conducting combined elections that involve county election administrators and school district officials.

The resolution also asks the committee to request the participation of stakeholders in the election process, including county election administrators, the Office of the Secretary of State, school administrators and officials, and other interested parties as determined by the committee.

### **Agency Monitoring Duties**

The committee is responsible for administrative rule review, draft legislation review, program evaluation, and monitoring functions for the following executive branch agencies:

- the Department of Administration, except the division of banking and financial institutions, the state compensation insurance fund, and the office of state public defender;
- the Public Employees' Retirement Board;
- the Teachers' Retirement Board;
- the Department of Military Affairs;
- the Board of Veterans' Affairs;
- the Office of the Secretary of State; and

- the Office of the Commissioner of Political Practices.

### **Pension Plan Oversight Duties**

Special duties assigned to the committee by statute require the committee to:

- consider the actuarial and fiscal soundness of the state's public employee retirement systems based on reports from the Teachers' Retirement Board, the Public Employees' Retirement Board, and the Board of Investments;
- study and evaluate the equity and benefit structure of the state's public employee retirement systems;
- establish principles of sound fiscal and public policy as guidelines;
- as necessary, develop legislation to keep the retirement systems consistent with sound policy principles; and
- publish, for legislators' use, information on the public employee retirement systems that the committee considers will be valuable to legislators when considering retirement legislation.

Additionally, the two "pension fix" bills from the 2013 session -- House Bill 377, which revised benefits and provided funding to the Teachers' Retirement System, and House Bill 454, which revised benefits and provided funding to the Public Employees' Retirement System -- require that, as soon as possible after the completion of the actuarial valuations for the systems, the retirement boards present a special actuarial report to SAVA and the Legislative Finance Committee that provides a trend analysis of the systems' actual and projected progress toward 100 percent funding.

### **For More Information**

For more information on the committee's activities and meeting schedule, visit the committee's website or contact Sheri Scurr, committee staff.

Committee Website: [www.leg.mt.gov/sava](http://www.leg.mt.gov/sava)

Committee Staff: [sscurr@mt.gov](mailto:sscurr@mt.gov) or 406-444-3596

### **Pardons and Parole, Family Law Studies Assigned to Law and Justice Committee**

The Law and Justice Interim Committee is established in section 5-5-226, MCA, and is charged with oversight during of the interim of the Office of the State Public Defender, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Justice, and any entity administratively attached to one of those agencies. The committee also acts as a liaison with the Judicial Branch.

The 2013-2014 committee has 12 members. Senate members are Sens. Shannon Augare, D-Browning; Scott Boulanger, R-Darby; Robyn Driscoll, D-Billings; Larry Jent, D-Bozeman; Terry Murphy, R-Cardwell; Scott Sales, R-Bozeman. House members are Reps. Jenny Eck, D-Helena; Ellie Boldman Hill, D-Missoula; Sarah Laszloffy, R-Laurel; Steve Lavin, R-Kalispell; Dennis Lenz, R-Billings; Margaret (Margie) MacDonald, D-Billings.

In addition to its agency oversight duties, the committee was assigned two interim studies by the Legislative Council. Senate Joint Resolution 3 requests an interim study of the Board of Pardons and Parole. It was requested by the 2011-2012 Law and Justice Committee and sponsored by Sen. Terry Murphy. It ranked tenth in the interim study poll. Senate Joint Resolution 22 requests a study of alternatives to the state's current family law system. Senator Larry Jent sponsored the bill and it ranked ninth in the interim study poll.

### For More Information

The committee has set a tentative date of July 10 for its organizational meeting. For more information on the committee's activities and 2013 meetings, visit the committee's website or contact Rachel Weiss, committee staff.

Committee Website: [www.leg.mt.gov/ljic](http://www.leg.mt.gov/ljic)

Committee Staff: [rweiss@mt.gov](mailto:rweiss@mt.gov) or 406-444-5367

## Legislative Suggestions, Court Challenge Mark Journey of Districting Committee

The Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission wrapped up its work in February, completing a four-year process to adjust Montana's legislative district boundaries for recent population changes.

On Jan. 8, the commission submitted a plan to redraw legislative district boundaries to the 2013 Legislature, as is required by the Montana Constitution and statutes. The Legislature had 30 days to consider the plan and recommend changes; however, the commission was not required to make adjustments based on those recommendations. On Jan. 11, Jim Regnier, the commission's presiding officer, spoke to a joint session of the Legislature to highlight the commission's work process and the results.

The Montana House formed a select committee to consider the legislative plan and to make House recommendations to the commission. The Senate used the existing Senate State Administration Standing Committee to do the same.

The House Select Committee on Redistricting considered two simple resolutions: House Resolution 2 introduced by Rep. Lee Randall, R-Broadus, and House Resolution 3 introduced by Rep. Pat Noonan, D-Ramsay. It amended HR 2 and sent it

to the House floor for consideration by the full House. The resolution was adopted with a 61-39 vote on Feb. 4.

The Senate State Administration Committee also considered two simple resolutions: Senate Resolution 3 introduced by Senate President Jeff Essmann, R-Billings, and Senate Resolution 4 introduced by Sen. Jim Keane, D-Butte. The committee amended SR 3 and sent it to the Senate floor for consideration. The resolution was adopted by the Senate in a 28-22 vote on Feb. 7.

On Feb. 12, the Districting Commission met to consider the legislative recommendations and to make any changes it felt necessary to the plan before submitting the final plan to the Secretary of State. Present at this final meeting was the commission's newest member, former state Sen. Carol Williams, D-Missoula. Williams was appointed by Senate Minority Leader Jon Sesso, D-Butte, to replace Commissioner Pat Smith, who resigned on Jan. 24 to accept a nomination by Gov. Steve Bullock to serve on the Northwest Power and Conservation Council.

After discussing and voting on several proposed changes to the House and Senate districts, the commission finalized the map and voted 3-2 to submit the plan to the Secretary of State. Upon filing the final plan with the Secretary of State, the commission was dissolved and no longer exists. Audio minutes of the final meeting, along with various meeting materials and maps, are available on the commission's website.

On March 14, a group of central Montana residents filed a lawsuit in Montana's 14th Judicial District Court challenging the plan's assignment of holdover senators in that area. Specifically, the lawsuit challenges the commission's decision on Feb. 12 to assign several holdover senators to different districts than it had initially in late 2012. The litigation is ongoing and documents related to it can be found on the commission's website.

### For More Information

The commission has dissolved and will not meet again. The next commission will be appointed by the leadership of the 2019 Legislature. For more information about the redistricting process in Montana or to view maps of the adopted districts, please view the commission's website or contact Rachel Weiss, legislative staff.

Commission Website: [www.leg.mt.gov/districting](http://www.leg.mt.gov/districting)

Staff: [rweiss@mt.gov](mailto:rweiss@mt.gov) or 406-444-5367

## Hunting License Fees, Historic Properties Highlight EQC Work List

The Legislative Environmental Quality Council (EQC) is tentatively scheduled to hold its first meeting of the 2013-2014

interim on June 19-20 in Room 172 of the Capitol in Helena. At this organizational meeting, the EQC will elect its presiding and vice-presiding officers and determine its work plan priorities for the next 15 months.

The EQC's potential workload includes the following studies requested by the 2013 Legislature:

- House Bill 609, a study of the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks' hunting and fishing license structure and fees;
- Senate Joint Resolution 4, a study of ways to improve the marketing, management, operation, maintenance, and funding of state-owned sites at Virginia City, Nevada City, and Reeder's Alley in Helena; and
- Senate Joint Resolution 15, a study evaluating the management of certain federal lands, assessing risks, and identifying solutions.

Legislative members assigned to the EQC this interim include: Rep. Jerry Bennett, R-Libby; Rep. Bill McChesney, D-Miles City; Rep. Virginia Court, D-Billings; Rep. Ed Lieser,

D-Whitefish; Rep. Jeff Welborn, R-Dillon; Rep. Kerry White, R-Bozeman; Sen. John Brenden, R-Scobey; Sen. Jennifer Fielder, R-Thompson Falls; Sen. Brad Hamlett, D-Cascade; Sen. Jim Keane, D-Butte; Sen. Rick Ripley, R-Wolf Creek; and Sen. Gene Vuckovich, D-Anaconda. The EQC has four public members as well, including Scott Aspenlieder, Helena; Dexter Busby, Great Falls; Mary Fitzpatrick, Billings; and Roy Morris, Butte. Tim Baker, a representative of the governor, will also serve on the EQC as a non-voting member.

Combined with the EQC's traditional slate of statutory and oversight duties, the 2013-2014 interim is shaping up to be a busy one for the council. A full agenda and meeting materials for the June meeting will be posted on the EQC's website at least 10 days in advance.

### Next Meeting

For more information on the EQC's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the council's website or contact Joe Kolman, council staff.

Committee Website: [www.leg.mt.gov/eqc](http://www.leg.mt.gov/eqc)

Committee Staff: [jkolman@mt.gov](mailto:jkolman@mt.gov) or 406-444-3747

## The Back Page An Overview of 2013-14 Interim Studies and Activities

by **Dave Bohyer, Director**  
**Office of Policy and Research Analysis**

The Legislative Services Division (LSD) is required to poll all legislators following the session to measure the relative importance of each study request passed by the legislature. The Legislative Council has the responsibility to assign the study requests to the various legislative interim committees and uses the poll results as one factor in making the determination. This Back Page article describes the results of the poll and the Council's assignment of the studies.

### The Interim Study Poll

The LSD staff mailed the poll on the first day following adjournment of the Legislature. Seventeen studies were included in the poll, with a return date of May 8. Staff compiled data from the ballots through May 9 and presented the results to the Legislative Council on May 16.

### Results of the Poll

Of the 150 ballots sent out, 107 were returned in time to be counted, for a participation rate of 71 percent. Several additional ballots were returned too late to be counted in the poll, which would have increased participation to about 77 percent.

The Borda voting method was used to rank each study requested. A ranking of "1" is the highest and a ranking of "17" is the lowest; the same method was applied to rankings in between. A study unranked on a ballot received zero points. (The Borda voting method is one method used by various organizations to rank the intercollegiate sports teams.)

The mean average number of points received by the studies was 773 points. The highest-ranking study, House Joint Resolution 17, received 1,090 points, while the lowest-ranked study, House Joint Resolution 30, received only 524 points. Of the 17 studies in the poll, nine received more than the average number of points and eight received fewer. The median number of points received was 785, meaning that eight studies received more than 785 points and eight studies received fewer.

Not quite four out of five legislators (77 percent) responded to the 2013 poll, compared to 77 percent in 2011, 66 percent in 2009, 70 percent in 2007, 82 percent in 2005, 78 percent in 2003, and 84 percent in 2001.

## LSD Staff Recommendations

LSD staff recommended that 16 of the 17 studies requested by resolution be conducted by interim committees and that HJR 30 be conducted by staff essentially as an information requested. The council generally concurred with the staff's recommendation.

In making the recommendations for interim studies, staff considered the poll results, committee funding, statutory duties, and committee and staff time commitments.

Because the Legislative Council has the responsibility of assigning interim studies, the staff recommendations are simply that: recommendations. Nevertheless, they are influenced by a number of factors, including:

- All interim studies are not created equal. Some have considerable breadth, depth, and complexity, while others are narrow and focused.
- The work of interim committees is not equal. Some have more extensive statutory duties and broader jurisdictions than others. Some have more members than others. Some have formed subcommittees that function much the same as full committees in terms of staff time and committee member effort.
- Interim studies are only part of what interim committees do during the interim. Each committee has a variety of statutory duties, including agency monitoring, administrative rule review, and consideration of potential legislation proposed by state agencies within the committee's jurisdiction. Some of those duties were expanded or reduced this past session by the passage of various bills.
- Each interim committee has statutory authority to examine policy matters within its purview, which typically extends beyond assigned interim studies. Staff experience suggests that each committee will exercise that authority to a greater or lesser extent. The issues that might arise or the level of involvement cannot be foreseen, but there is a history that these types of projects are likely to occur.
- Resources – staff time, committee time, and funding – are all limited.

The Legislative Council met on May 16 to decide on interim study assignments. Following staff recommendations and testimony from several sponsors of the study resolutions and from lobbyists, the council made the assignments as shown in Table 1 on page YYY. Although the council did not assign HJR 30 to an interim committee, the council did assign it to LSD staff as an information request. The results, when compiled, will be distributed or presented to several committees and will be posted on the LSD website.

The Legislature itself also assigned the House Bill 609 study of hunting and fishing licensing to the Environmental Quality Council. Additionally, House Bill 525 from 2011 directs the Economic Affairs Interim Committee to continue the study of business and professional licensing laws to provide termination review.

At this writing, the fate of House Bill 633 reestablishing the 12-member Select Committee on Efficiency in Government lies in legislators' hands as the governor's veto of the bill is being polled for possible override. If the veto is overridden, the Select Committee will study the general areas of health care, technology, and administrative rules processes in the context of the efficiency and effectiveness.

## Preview of Interim Activities

The 2013-14 interim is just beginning to take shape, although none of the interim committees has met yet.

In addition to interim studies, each interim committee has a range of statutory duties and responsibilities, which can be found in Title 5, chapter 5, part 2, MCA, and for the Environmental Quality Council in Title 75, chapter 1, part 3, MCA. The duties and responsibilities for the administrative committees of the Legislature (Legislative Audit Committee, Legislative Consumer Committee, Legislative Council, and the Legislative Finance Committee) that meet during the interim are contained in various chapters within Title 5, MCA. Other committees on which legislators serve may be found throughout the MCA.

With interim committee meetings being planned for the summer, draft work plans and proposed meeting schedules will soon be available. Stay tuned as more information will be provided in subsequent issues of The Interim newsletter and on committee web pages. In the meantime, check the legislative website at [leg.mt.gov](http://leg.mt.gov) or call the LSD at 406-444-3064 with any questions you may have regarding the poll, a particular study, or any of the interim committees.

[Click here for the summary of committee staff and study assignments.](#)

[Click here for the poll results.](#)