

INTRODUCTION VOLUME 1

The purpose of this report (Volumes 1 through 4) is to provide legislators and all interested parties with information regarding the fiscal actions of the 2013 Legislature (including both legislation passed and stated legislative intent related to fiscal issues) and the fiscal status of state government through the 2015 biennium. This report seeks to accomplish this by providing an objective perspective on the state's fiscal condition and on the fiscal outcomes of the 2013 regular session. In addition, this report is a reference document for all legislators, as well as an historic record of fiscal decisions, and provides a myriad of information about Montana state government.

Volume 1 is intended to complement Volumes 2 through 4 of the Legislative Fiscal Report – 2015 Biennium, by providing an executive summary and general overview of the budget approved by the legislature. While Volumes 2 through 4 of the Legislative Fiscal Report 2015 biennium describe the detailed results of the 2013 Legislature's actions regarding revenue estimates and expenditures and adopted budgets of state programs, Volume 1 presents a broader fiscal overview and discusses significant fiscal and policy issues that either cut across program or agency lines or do not necessarily fall under the jurisdiction of a single committee of the legislature.

This volume is divided into six parts:

- **2015 Biennium Budget Overview** provides a high-level executive summary
- **Perspectives on the Economy** describes the current outlook for the economy
- **State Revenues Perspectives** provides a review of the revenue projections used to craft the 2015 biennium budget
- **Overview of State Expenditures** provides an overview of the state spending plan for the 2015 biennium
- **Other Budget Issues** includes discussions of significant fiscal issues can be found on page 67 of this volume
- **Appendices A, B, and C** contain information that further defines various aspects of the legislative budget

WHAT IS CONTAINED IN VOLUMES 2 THROUGH 4?

Volume 2

Volume 2 includes a summary and overview of the state's major revenue sources. A review of the table of contents will give the reader a quick idea of revenue sources included and the structure of the report. It also describes the legislative actions that affected the various revenue sources.

Volumes 3 and 4

Volumes 3 and 4 offer detailed summaries of each individual agency budget as adopted by the legislature. These volumes feature program-by-program detail, including a summary of legislative intent where appropriate. Agency presentations are grouped in sections corresponding to the appropriations subcommittee that reviewed each agency budget.

- Volume 3 contains:
 - House Bill 2 – General Appropriations Act of 2013
 - Section A – General Government
 - Section B – Health and Human Services

- Volume 4 contains:
 - Section C – Natural Resources and Transportation
 - Section D – Judicial Branch, Law Enforcement, and Justice
 - Section E – Education
 - Section F – Long-Range Planning

The basic structure used for the report is consistent across agencies. Agency budgets are presented in three tiers as required by statute:

- Base budget: the level of ongoing funding spent in FY 2012
- Present law base: the additional level of funding needed under present law to maintain operations and services at the level authorized by the previous legislature
- New proposals: requests to provide new non-mandated services, to change program services, to eliminate existing services, or to change sources of funding

Legislators use the base budget as the starting point, then incrementally either add or subtract funds through either present law adjustments or new proposals to arrive at a total approved budget for an agency. These volumes detail an agency's appropriations, both in tables and narrative, and present detailed discussions of present law adjustments, new proposals, and new legislation.