

SB 310 - Public and Legislator Comments During Legislative Week Summary

Prepared for the SB 310 Steering Committee

March 2020

Positive on Annual Sessions

- Good for families
- Beneficial to have 45-day session with transmittal at end of odd-year
- Don't have to be away for 4 months, easier to be away 2 months each year
- Would make recruiting easier
- Move to 50-day annual sessions, split budget and policy
- 1st session, introduce new members, orientation, deal only with budget, experience committees leaves one year to craft legislation
- If pursued retain semblance of interim committee structure
- Yes on annual sessions and limit the number of bills

Negative on Annual Sessions

- Needs deep analysis on other states, even with a budget/policy split, would still run into predictability of budget and volatility of revenue
- Favor biennial citing the time commitment involved
- How would shorter annual sessions be beneficial to new members? Need for an educational component early
- Would disempower and reduce institutional memory and expertise around interim committees, annual sessions would be detrimental
- Change the calendar to compensate (i.e. term limits)
- Cost of annual sessions
- Would impact lobbyists and candidate reporting to COPP
- How would annual sessions change the silo?

Oregon Commission

- Support a commission
- Would open the process to the public

Constitutional Amendment Necessary

- Biennial sessions were put in by vote of the people
- Keep restrictions in mind and adjustments that have to be made
- To change should be constitutionally mandated
- Important that the vote goes to people of Montana

Budget Committees

- Role of budget committees is to prioritize use of resources
- There should be more back and forth - if you can't afford a bill, it should go back to the policy committee for more work

- We tend to silo members to budget or policy

Interim Committees

- Strengthen interim committees by adding members
- Build more cross-pollination with budget and policy
- Invest in interim committees to develop expertise
- Having more meetings, more places/offsite, and provide ability for public to be involved
- Add budget members on policy committees and vice versa

Start of Session

- Start session later - February
- Delaying start is a good idea
- Delay start of session for a month
- Start session, then take a week off to draft bills and get to committees

Training/Legislative Week

- More senior mentoring, more mentoring
- Have a legislative week during session
- Legislative Week would be more beneficial in fall
- Have a mock budget session for newbies
- Budget training for all was helpful in past, also need to understand administrative rules as a tool

Other

- Repeal term limits
- Discussion on 2017 special session and whether it could have been avoided with annual sessions.

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