
AMENDMENTS IN CONTEXT

2023 Session:

Allowing Legislators to fully understand the amendments in context of the bill to be fully informed of the amendments they are voting on



REMEMBER “GREY BILLS”?

- The Session Systems Replacement Project has provided us a new way to create amendments and was used partially in the 2021 session.
- Previously, it was the amendment instructions that were used for committee hearings and floor session amendments.
- “Grey bills” were bills that staff engrossed the amendments so that legislators could see how the amendments looked in context of the bill, instead of having to try to match page and line number.
- However, once an amendment passed, the bill processors would have to re-engross the amendment into the next version of the bill from the instructions.
- **OVERALL GOAL:** Making amendments easy to understand!



AMENDMENT COMPARISON

Amendment Instruction

4. Page 2, line 9.

Following: "computerized"

Insert: ", "

Strike: "income, asset, and identity eligibility verification"

Insert: "enhanced"

5. Page 2, line 10.

Following: "eligibility,"

Insert: "assess income and assets,"

Following: "deter"

Insert: "errors, omissions,"

6. Page 2, line 10 through line 11.

Strike: "each" on line 10 through "administers" on line 11

Insert: "the following programs:

- (a) the food assistance program provided for in Title 53, chapter 2, part 9;
- (b) the temporary assistance for needy families program provided for in Title 53, chapter 4, part 2;
- (c) the children's health insurance program provided for in Title 53, chapter 4, part 10;
- (d) medical assistance programs provided for in Title 53, chapter 6, that serve adults and for which the income eligibility standard is based solely on an applicant's modified adjusted gross income; and
- (e) the Montana Health and Economic Livelihood Partnership Act program provided for in Title 53, chapter 6, part 13"

Amendment In Context (AIC)

9 NEW SECTION. Section 2. Establishment of enhanced eligibility verification system. (1) The
10 department shall establish a computerized ~~income, asset, and identity eligibility verification~~ enhanced system
11 in order to verify eligibility, assess income and assets, eliminate the duplication of assistance, and deter errors,
12 omissions, waste, fraud, and abuse in ~~each public assistance program that the department administers~~ the
13 following programs:
14 (a) the food assistance program provided for in Title 53, chapter 2, part 9;
15 (b) the temporary assistance for needy families program provided for in Title 53, chapter 4, part 2;
16 (c) the children's health insurance program provided for in Title 53, chapter 4, part 10;
17 (d) medical assistance programs provided for in Title 53, chapter 6, that serve adults and for which
18 the income eligibility standard is based solely on an applicant's modified adjusted gross income; and
19 (e) the Montana Health and Economic Livelihood Partnership Act program provided for in Title 53,
20 chapter 6, part 13.



Amendment - 1st Reading - Requested by: Cary Smith

67th Legislature

Drafter: Sue O'Connell, 406-444-3597

SB 100.1.1

1 SENATE BILL NO. 100
2 INTRODUCED BY C. SMITH
3
4 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES FOR PREVENTING FRAUD IN
5 PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS; ESTABLISHING VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR

EACH AMENDMENT IS UNIQUE

Contains unique identifying number
in upper right corner

Identifies the amendment requester
and reading of bill

Identifies drafter.

System has capability to combine
multiple amendments

Amendments only posted with
requesters OK

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2021

All amendments are drafts only for consideration by a committee and are subject to change. An amendment formally adopted by the committee will be incorporated into the standing committee report to the respective body and, if adopted, will be engrossed into the next version of the bill.

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PROCESS COMPARISON

Former process

- staff drafted an amendments either by hand or eventually in WordPerfect
- a hard copy was taken to the editors for editing
- if the amendment passed, it was incorporated into the committee report to be read over the rostrum and was then inserted in whole into the Journal
- a bank of data entry staff had to take the amendment instructions and engross the amendments into the next version of the bill.

2021 Process

- the drafter drafts the amendment into the bill in WORD using the bill drafting system, basically engrossing the draft amendment into a separate version of the bill
- the drafter uses the new dashboard to electronically transmit the amendment to editors for editing
- before transmittal, the editors tried to create amendment instructions for all amendments from the AIC but the workload was too great and duplicative
- the instructions were still being made in WordPerfect for the committee report and the Journal
- after transmittal, instructions were made only for the committee amendments that passed and for all floor amendments



- In completing the LAWS II Project, Chamber and Committee processes will be fully incorporated.
- **Advantages:**
 - AIC fully informs legislators & the public
 - WordPerfect will no longer be used.
 - Using Amendments-in-Context exclusively would save time on the process by eliminating the need for instructions. The amendment is engrossed and if passed, is processed much more quickly
 - Amendments are posted to the web for easy access by legislators and the public. Hard copies could still be made as requested.
 - Committee and floor amendments can be treated separately
 - Legislator Portal will make it easier to find the agendas, bills, and amendments
- **Potential disadvantages:**
 - Need color copies to be able to see amendments – amendments will be posted and electronic use will be widespread
 - Content of committee report/journal would need to be clarified and may only refer to amendment number (which is unique and posted to the website).
- **Ideas:**
 - Additional training, legends, & reference materials
 - Consider providing tablets to legislators who want to go electronic

2023 PLAN

LAWS II will be fully implemented
and in place for the 2023 session



- Susan Fox and Todd Everts have consulted with Marilyn Miller and Carolyn Tschida.
- They suggested that we consult with legislators to explain the situation and get feedback.
- We would like to ask for Legislative Council and leadership recommendations to assist in refining the business processes for next session.
- There is a time element involved. The sooner we can accomplish this, the better the End-to-End test of the entire LAWS II system (bill draft request through passage and codification) will be. Currently scheduled for late 2021, early 2022.

REQUEST

For the Legislative Council to provide direction on how to review the new process for refinement and suggestions of the business processes, specifically for committee and second reading amendments.





**THANK
YOU!**

