



Legislative Council

65th Montana Legislature

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SUSAN FOX, Executive Director
TODD EVERTS, Legal Division Director
FONG HOM, Secretary

June 8, 2017

To: Interim and Administrative Committee members and staff

From: Susan B. Fox

Re: Legislative Council Action on Interim Committee Assignments

The Legislative Council assigned the 20 interim studies to interim committees on June 6, 2017 (see table). The Council adopted the staff recommendation on 19 studies and changed the assignment of SJ32 to the Economic Affairs Interim Committee because of the licensing and economic development aspects of the study.

In addition, the Council made the following recommendations:

1. * An HJR 20 subcommittee should be established by the Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee (CFHHS). It could include public members or stakeholders and legislators. The Council agreed to set aside some money from the emerging issues budget to cover subcommittee costs, if necessary. The Council directed Legislative Services and Fiscal Divisions to work together to coordinate additional staffing resources to accommodate the subcommittee's needs. The Economic Affairs Interim Committee, in addition to CFHHS, should appoint a member or members to the HJR 20 subcommittee. And given the sizable scope of the HJR 17 study of prescription drugs, the Committee should consider whether it has time to undertake the study.
2. The Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee is encouraged to review Montana's Energy Policy with a focus on issues pertaining to costs and to promoting the exportation of Montana's energy resources. This may include discussions of Colstrip, large customer choice, and other energy resources.
3. The Revenue and Transportation Interim Committee is encouraged to closely monitor implementation of House Bill No. 473. The Council recommends actively looking at accountability for the gas tax revenue and the escalating transportation costs. These activities could be more robust than the audit and follow-up required in the legislation.
4. The Legislative Finance Committee is encouraged to review broadband pay.
5. The Legislative Audit Committee is encouraged to explore the overall audit structure in the executive and legislative branches by looking at other state governments and opportunities for streamlining.