

# STUDY & WORK PLAN PROPOSAL

*Prepared for the*

***State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Interim Committee 2017-18***

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## **Purpose**

This paper presents a study plan proposal for the State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Interim Committee to consider, revise as appropriate, and adopt by majority vote. A study plan provides committee members and staff with a blue print for structuring the committee's work according to agreed upon topics and priorities. The study questions and the proposed approach to answering these questions are used to set each meeting's agenda items. A study plan also informs interested stakeholders about what to expect during the interim.

The proposed study questions and approach as outlined in Table 1 is organized into a work plan proposal offered at this end of this paper. This work plan is organized by meeting date in Table 2 and by topic in Table 3.

The study and work plan are dynamic working documents subject to changes and refinements as work progresses. As a committee-approved plan, significant changes should not be made without the full committee's consent. Staff works with the presiding officer and vice-presiding officer when finalizing the agenda for each meeting.

## **Scope**

This study plan is based on the committee's discussion during its July 20 meeting. At that meeting, committee members by consensus identified the following study topics and priorities, which are further detailed in this paper.

### Tier one - highest priority

- I. Elections - Aging Voting Systems
- II. Pension Plans - Actuarial Funding Status

### Tier two - lesser priority

- III. Veterans - Suicide Prevention, Benefit Claims, VA Health Care System (transportation, future of the Miles City nursing home)
- IV. Campaign Contribution Limits
- V. Local Election Statutes - special districts, city and county commission primary elections and partisan or nonpartisan basis
- VI. State Employee Pay Plan - monitoring

**TABLE 1 - STUDY PLAN**

Study Topic/Questions	Study Plan Approach
<b>I. Elections - Aging Voting Systems</b>	<b>Priority: Tier One (i.e., highest priority)</b>
<p><u>A. ADA systems - AutoMark and other technologies</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the current statutes on ADA voting systems and the certification process?</li> <li>2. What is the ES&amp;S AutoMark machine, how is it currently used in Montana, and how are they maintained or do they need to be replaced with another system?</li> <li>3. What are the feasible alternatives for maintaining or replacing the AutoMark machines?</li> <li>4. What are the cost and funding options?</li> <li>5. Is legislation needed/desirable? If so, what legislation does the committee wish to pursue as a final recommendation? If legislation is not needed or desirable, does the committee wish to make a recommendation for a certain non-legislative course of action?</li> </ol> <p><u>B. Vote tabulation systems (e.g., optical scan systems)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the current statutes on vote tabulation systems and the certification process in Montana?</li> <li>2. What voting systems are used by Montana's counties? And, what is their current condition (i.e., what are the maintenance and/or replacement needs)?</li> <li>3. What do are the associated costs and funding options?</li> <li>4. Is legislation needed/desirable and if so, what options are available? Which option(s) does the committee wish to pursue (i.e., final recommendations)?</li> </ol>	<p><u>For both ADA and non-ADA voting systems/machines:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Demonstrations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- election administrators</li> <li>- instructional/training videos</li> <li>- private-sector experts on available systems</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Staff report(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- current statutes</li> <li>- system certification criteria (Sec. of State's role)</li> <li>- need for and use of voting systems in each county</li> <li>- issues and options regarding maintaining/replacing the systems</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. Special presentations (e.g., individual testimony and/or panel discussions): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NCSL - other states, available technologies, funding options</li> <li>- county election administrators</li> <li>- private-sector system experts, ES&amp;S and various other vendors</li> <li>- county officials and finance officers</li> </ul> </li> <li>d. Committee work sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identification of issues appropriate for legislative action</li> <li>- selection of options for further analysis</li> <li>- preliminary recommendations</li> <li>- final recommendations</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

Study Topic/Questions	Study Plan Approach
<b>II. Pension Plans - Actuarial Funding Status</b>	<b>Priority: Tier One (i.e., highest priority)</b>
<p><u>A. Background and education</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the key actuarial assumptions and how are they set?</li>   <li>2. What is the actuarial funding status of each pension plan (special attention to any unsound systems following the Nov. 2017 actuarial valuations)?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Staff reports and presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Legislator's Guide</li> <li>- Green Sheets</li> <li>- Actuarial Association Professional Guidelines/Standards</li> <li>- NCSL and other National Association fact sheets and comparisons with other states</li> </ul> </li>   <li>b. Presentations on actuarial valuation results (e.g., briefings from MPERA and TRS)</li>   <li>c. Presentations on MPERA and TRS experience studies (MPERA and TRS staff).</li>   <li>d. Special presentations upon request of the committee</li> </ol>
<p><u>B. Issues and options identification</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are legislative changes needed to maintain actuarial soundness?</li>   <li>2. If so, what options for legislative action should be further analyzed?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Staff report on issues and options</li>   <li>b. Stakeholder comments</li>   <li>c. Committee work session(s) to instruct staff on what additional information should be provided</li> </ol>
<p><u>C. Committee recommendations</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the committee wish to recommend specific legislation?</li>   <li>2. If so, what should be provided for in the legislation?</li>   <li>3. What informational material should be made available for the 2019 Session?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Committee work session - instructions for drafting legislation (if any)</li>   <li>b. Committee work session - final revisions and adoption of legislation (if any)</li>   <li>c. Committee work session - final revisions and adoption of Legislator's Guide, guiding principles as required by statute, and any other materials SAVA deems would be valuable for the 2019 Session (e.g., the "green sheets")</li> </ol>

Study Topic/Questions	Study Plan Approach
<b>III. Veterans - Suicide Prevention, Benefit Claims, VA Health Care System</b>	<b>Priority: Tier Two (i.e. lesser priority)</b>
<p><u>A. Suicide Prevention</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Education and background on state, VA, and MT National Guard Programs</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Informational briefings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- State suicide prevention program, DPHHS</li> <li>- Juliana Hallows, VA suicide prevention coordinator</li> <li>- MT National Guard suicide prevention program</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<p><u>B. Benefit Claims</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Education and background <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What is the role of state Veteran Service Officers and how are they trained and certified?</li> <li>b. How do veterans file claims without using a state VSO?</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Are there legislative issues the committee could address to help ensure veterans are getting quality benefit claims services through certified VSOs?</li> <li>3. If there are legislative issues the committee wishes to address, how would the committee like to address them ?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Informational briefings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MVAD</li> <li>- VA</li> <li>- Other stakeholders</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Staff issues and options paper (if the committee identifies issues that may be addressed legislatively)</li> <li>c. Stakeholder comments</li> <li>d. Committee work session(s) on whether there are legislative issues, and if so, how the committee would like to address those issues?</li> </ol>
<p><u>C. VA Health Care System</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Future of Miles City nursing home</li> <li>2. Transportation issues</li> <li>3. Report on steering committee about allocation of VA health care resources in VISN 19 (Rocky Mountain Network)</li> </ol>	<p>Informational briefings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VA speaker on nursing home in Miles City</li> <li>- VA and DAV speakers on transportation</li> <li>- Joe Foster, administrator of MVAD, report on latest developments regarding the VISN 19 steering committee activities</li> </ul>

Study Topic/Questions	Study Plan Approach
<b>IV. Campaign Contribution Limits</b>	<b>Priority: Tier Two (i.e. lesser priority)</b>
<p><u>A. Background and education</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the current contribution limits?</li> <li>2. What are the facts and issues in the relevant court proceeding pending at the 9th Circuit?</li> <li>3. What did the 2017 Legislature consider with respect to contribution limit changes?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Staff report(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- current statutes and COPP policies on contribution limits</li> <li>- provisions of 2017 bills addressing contribution limits</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Briefings and invited testimony <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commissioner of Political Practices and staff</li> <li>- Trial Lawyer's Assoc.</li> <li>- Other interested persons/stakeholders</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<p><u>B. Committee recommendations</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the committee wish to recommend legislation?</li> <li>2. If so, what should be provided for in the legislation?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Stakeholder comments</li> <li>b. Committee work session on whether to recommend legislation?</li> <li>b. If the committee chooses to recommend legislation, work session to take public comment and finalize bill draft(s)</li> </ol>

Study Topic/Questions	Study Plan Approach
<b>V. Local Election Statutes - inconsistencies</b>	<b>Priority: Tier Two (i.e. lesser priority)</b>
<p><u>A. Special purpose district elections</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How are election statutes governing special purpose district elections inconsistent?</li> <li>2. Should the committee recommend legislation to address inconsistencies or are there sound policy reasons for the differences?</li> <li>3. If changes are desirable, how should the current statutes be changed?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Staff report on current statutes comparing provisions on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- eligible voter criteria</li> <li>- deadlines for providing voter eligibility information to the election administrator</li> <li>- how special district elections are conducted</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Stakeholder comment</li> <li>c. Committee work session(s)</li> </ol>
<p><u>B. Cancellation of municipal and county primary elections</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the statutory inconsistencies with respect to when a municipal and county primary election may be cancelled?</li> <li>2. Should the committee recommend legislation to address inconsistencies or are there sound policy reasons for the differences?</li> <li>3. If changes are desirable, how should the current statutes be changed?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Staff report on current statutes comparing provisions applicable to primary elections for county and municipal commissioners</li> <li>b. Stakeholder comment</li> <li>c. Committee work session(s)</li> </ol>

Study Topic/Questions	Study Plan Approach
<b>VI. State Employee Pay Plan - monitoring</b>	<b>Priority: Tier Two (i.e. lesser priority)</b>
<p><u>A. Background and education</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the broadband pay plan?</li> <li>2. How are positions classified?</li> <li>3. What were the findings of recent legislative studies?</li> <li>4. What were the most recent legislative changes?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Staff report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LFC's previous study and findings</li> <li>- recent legislative changes from 2015 and 2017 Sessions</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Information briefings from the Department of Administration, classification and pay staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- classification factors</li> <li>- broadband concepts</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. Stakeholder comments</li> <li>d. Committee work session(s) if committee decides to develop recommendations for the 2019 Session</li> </ol>
<p><u>B. Correctional officers classification and pay</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the current pay rate for correctional officers?</li> <li>2. What are the challenges related to pay levels for these officers?</li> <li>3. What options should the legislature consider?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Informational briefings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Department of Corrections</li> <li>- Department of Administration, classification and pay</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Stakeholder comments</li> <li>c. Committee work session(s) if the committee decides to develop recommendations for the 2019 Session</li> </ol>
<p><u>C. Partisan or nonpartisan municipal and county elections</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the statutory provisions concerning whether a municipal or county election must be held on a partisan or nonpartisan basis?</li> <li>2. Should these statutory provisions be changed in some way, and if so, how?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Staff report on current statutes comparing provisions applicable to whether partisan or nonpartisan elections are conducted for county and municipal commissions</li> <li>b. Stakeholder comment</li> <li>c. Committee work session(s)</li> </ol>

**TABLE 2 - Work Plan - By Meeting Date**

Meeting Date	Main Agenda Items
<b>Sept. 14, 2017</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Elections - ballot handling and rejected ballots (special request for information)</li> <li>- Veterans suicide prevention, transportation - info. briefings</li> <li>- Special district elections - staff report</li> </ul>
<b>Nov. 14, 2017</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Elections - aging voting systems, AutoMark and ADA issue identification</li> <li>- Pension plans - actuarial valuations and staff report on actuarial assumptions</li> <li>- Veterans benefit claims process, VA health care system (report on Miles City and VISN 19 steering committee)</li> <li>- Special district elections - continue statutory review</li> </ul>
<b>Jan. 18, 2018</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Elections - aging voting systems, options identification</li> <li>- Campaign contribution limits, overview of current law, court proceeding</li> <li>- Any followup on veterans benefit claims process</li> <li>- Special district election statutes - preliminary recommendations</li> <li>- Any followup on requests for additional info. on pension plans</li> </ul>
<b>March 22, 2018</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Elections - aging voting systems - special presentations (NCSL, private sector vendors, election administrators, county finance, secretary of state's office)</li> <li>- Any followup on campaign contribution issues, or other tier two issues</li> <li>- Local election statutes - staff report on inconsistencies</li> </ul>
<b>May 17, 2018</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Elections - aging voting systems - followup from March - begin developing preliminary recommendations</li> <li>- Local election statutes - follow up, preliminary recommendations</li> <li>- State employee pay plan, staff report and info. briefings</li> <li>- Review any agency legislative concepts ready for SAVA review and authorization for bill drafting</li> </ul>
<b>July 19, 2018</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Elections - aging voting systems - further work on recommendations</li> <li>- Pension plan actuarial funding - TRS experience study, further information and committee discussion on pension funding issues</li> <li>- Other issues - public hearings on any preliminary recommendations/committee legislation</li> <li>- Review any agency legislative concepts ready for SAVA review and authorization for bill drafting</li> </ul>
<b>Aug. 23, 2018</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review all remaining agency legislative concepts ready for SAVA review and authorization for bill drafting</li> <li>- Review and adopt any final reports and committee legislation</li> </ul>
<b>Nov., 2018</b>	<p>Pension plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review actuarial valuations</li> <li>- Finalize any committee legislation on pensions</li> <li>- Review and adopt legislators guide, green sheets, and any other materials for legislators on pension plans for 2019 Session</li> </ul>

**TABLE 3 - Work Plan - By Topic**

Topic	Meeting Dates and Agenda Items
<p><b>Election Systems</b></p>	<p><b>Sept. 14, 2017</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff report on statutes concerning voting system certification and returned ballot processing</li> <li>- Demo on statewide voter registration data base</li> <li>- Background info. on how returned and absentee ballots are handled</li> <li>- Intro. to AutoMark system for disabled voters</li> </ul> <p><b>Nov. 14, 2017</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More info. on AutoMark, other voting systems used in Montana</li> <li>- Tour of county election office</li> <li>- Issue identification for further analysis</li> </ul> <p><b>Jan. 18, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aging voting system, analysis of identified issues</li> <li>- Selection of options for further consideration</li> </ul> <p><b>March 22, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Special expert testimony (NCSL, private vendors, other states, election administrators)</li> </ul> <p><b>May 17, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop preliminary recommendations, instructions on any bill drafts</li> </ul> <p><b>July 19, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Finalize recommendations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pension Plans</b></p>	<p><b>Nov. 14, 2017</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Receive reports on actuarial valuations</li> <li>- Identify issues for further analysis</li> </ul> <p><b>Jan. 18, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Followup on information requests from Nov. meeting</li> </ul> <p><b>July 19, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Report on TRS experience study</li> <li>- Identify issues for further analysis/info. requests</li> </ul> <p><b>Aug., 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow up on information requests from July meeting</li> <li>- Develop framework for any committee pension legislation</li> </ul> <p><b>Nov., 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review new actuarial valuations</li> <li>- Review "green sheets"</li> <li>- Adopt guiding principles</li> <li>- Review and approve Legislator's Guide to Montana's Public Employee Retirement Systems</li> <li>- Finalize any committee pension legislation</li> </ul>

Topic	Meeting Dates and Agenda Items
<b>Veterans' Affairs</b>	<p><b>Sept. 14, 2017</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Info. briefings on VA and DAV transportation assets, locations, processes</li> <li>- Info. briefings on state and VA suicide data and prevention efforts</li> </ul> <p><b>Nov. 14, 2017</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Benefit claims process, role of state veteran services officers, claims processing at VA</li> <li>- Info. briefing on status of VA health care system changes, such as closure of Miles City nursing home</li> </ul> <p><i>* If discussions yield further information requests or a request for committee legislation, this may be added to the agenda and meeting schedule subject to committee approval.</i></p> <p><b>July 19, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Committee to finalize any recommendations or legislation</li> </ul>
<b>Campaign Contribution Limits</b>	<p><b>Jan. 18, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff report on current statutes and COPP decisions</li> <li>- Info. briefings on issues concerning pending court case</li> </ul> <p><b>March 22, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow up on any additional information requests from Jan. meeting</li> </ul> <p><i>* If discussions yield further information requests or a request for committee legislation, this may be added to the agenda and meeting schedule subject to committee approval.</i></p> <p><b>July 19, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Committee to finalize any recommendations or legislation</li> </ul>
<b>Special District Elections</b>	<p><b>Sept. 14, 2017</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff report - background and begin to analyze current statutes</li> </ul> <p><b>Nov. 14, 2017</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff report - continued analysis of current statutes</li> <li>- Stakeholder comments, feedback</li> </ul> <p><b>Jan. 18, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff report - continued analysis of current statutes</li> <li>- Committee to develop any preliminary recommendations/legislation</li> <li>- Stakeholder comments</li> </ul> <p><b>July 19, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Finalize any recommendations or legislation</li> </ul>

Topic	Meeting Dates and Agenda Items
<p><b>Local Government Elections</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cancellation of primaries</li> <li>- partisan or nonpartisan election</li> </ul>	<p><b>March 22, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff report on inconsistencies</li> <li>- Stakeholder comments</li> </ul> <p><b>May 17, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop preliminary recommendations, instructions on any bill drafts</li> </ul> <p><b>July 19, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Finalize recommendations</li> </ul>
<p><b>State Employee Pay Plan - monitoring</b></p>	<p><b>May 17, 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff report, background on LFC study, status of implementation of changes</li> <li>- Informational briefings from agency</li> </ul>
<p><b>Statutory Oversight Duties</b></p>	<p><b>All Meetings - Rule Review Agenda Item</b></p> <p><b>July 19, 2018 -</b> Begin reviewing agency legislative proposals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dept. of Administration</li> <li>- Dept. of Military Affairs and Board of Veterans' Affairs</li> <li>- Secretary of State's Office</li> <li>- Commissioner of Political Practices</li> </ul> <p><b>Aug. 23, 2018 -</b> Finish review of agency legislative proposals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Any follow up from agencies listed in July</li> <li>- Public Employees' Retirement Board</li> <li>- Teachers' Retirement Board</li> </ul> <p><b>Nov. 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Any adjustments to or new proposals by PERB and TRB proposals</li> </ul>

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