

2019 LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

STATE-TRIBAL RELATIONS

OVERVIEW

The 2019 Legislature enacted a number of bills related to state-tribal relations and Indian Country. This summary provides an overview of major legislation and budget provisions of House Bill 2.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

HB 369 – Creates a criminal justice oversight council, the membership of which includes a tribal member with criminal justice expertise.

HB 654 – Requires licensing of opioid sellers and appropriates license funds received to expand treatment courts. Tribal treatment courts are eligible to receive funds.

SB 289 – Provides safe harbor for pregnant women seeking assistance for substance abuse.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HB 2 – Appropriates \$1.75 million for the biennium to the Indian Country Economic Development grant program at the Department of Commerce.

HB 632 – Requires the Department of Commerce to publish a decennial report on economic impact of Indian reservations starting in 2020.

EDUCATION

SB 212 – Revises laws on payments to tribal colleges for enrolled resident nonbeneficiary students.

ELECTIONS

HJ 10 – Study resolution to address barriers to American Indian voting.

FINANCE

HB 428 – Expands the state infrastructure loan program and the INTERCAP loan program for tribal governments.

FISH, WILDLIFE, AND PARKS

HB 411 – Revises laws related to aquatic invasive species program funding, requires an AIS prevention pass for nonresident vessels, decreases prevention pass fees for nonresident anglers, increases registration fees for resident motorized vessels, extends and revises hydroelectric fees, reallocates lodging tax revenue, and appropriates funds to the Departments of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks and Natural Resources and Conservation.

HB 608 – Requires mandatory aquatic invasive species decontamination of certain vessels with ballast/bladders.

SB 24 – Increases the optional light motor vehicle registration fee for parks and recreation and creates a trails and recreational facilities grant program for which tribal governments are eligible.

GOVERNMENT

HB 524 – Revises laws related to the installation of an American Indian monument and tribal flag circle on the Capitol Complex in Helena.

HB 632 – Requires the Department of Commerce to publish a decennial report on economic impact of Indian reservations starting in 2020.

HEALTHCARE

HB 599 – Recognizes federal authority to establish a community health aide program for tribal facilities in Montana and allows those services to be reimbursed under the state Medicaid plan if the services are provided by those meeting federal certification standards.

HB 658 – Revises healthcare laws and permanently expands Medicaid.

HB 696 – Appropriates \$500,000 for suicide prevention efforts, including implementation of the Montana native youth suicide reduction strategic plan published in January 2017.

SB 30* - Allows adult peer support services to be reimbursed under Medicaid and appropriates \$7.1 million.

SB 289 – Provides safe harbor for pregnant women seeking assistance for substance abuse.

LANGUAGE

HB 2 – Appropriates \$1.5 million for the biennium to the Montana Indian Language Preservation Program.

HB 33* – Extends the Montana Indian Language Preservation Program by 4 years to June 30, 2023.

HB 41* – Extends the Cultural Integrity and Commitment Act by 4 years to June 30, 2023.

HJ 20 – Resolution supporting the United Nations International Year of Indigenous Languages.

MISSING PERSONS

HB 20* – Requires a missing persons report to be filed in custodial interference cases if the whereabouts of the involved child is unknown.

HB 21* – Establishes “Hanna’s Act”, authorizes the Montana Department of Justice to assist with the investigation of all missing persons cases, requires the department to employ a missing persons specialist, provides specialist duties, and appropriates \$205,000 for the biennium.

HB 54* – Requires all law enforcement authorities in the state to accept, without delay, any report of a missing person unless there are certain extenuating circumstances.

SB 40* - Requires the Office of Public Instruction to create and maintain an electronic repository of school photos of students whose parents give permission for the photo to be kept and released to law enforcement if a student is identified as missing.

SB 312 – Creates the Looping in Native Communities Network grant program in support of tribes’ efforts to identify, report, and find missing American Indians, creates the Missing Indigenous Persons Task Force to administer the grant program, and appropriates \$25,000.

VETOED BY GOVERNOR

HB 332 – Required county approval to relocate bison.

HB 482 – Required agency reporting on financial assistance to tribes.

Outcome of Legislation Proposed by 2017-2018 State-Tribal Relations Committee

HB 18	Provide funding for school district programs serving English Learners	Died in House Education
HB 20	Require missing persons report in certain cases of custodial interference	Chapter Number Assigned
HB 21	Establish “Hanna’s Act”	Chapter Number Assigned
HB 33	Extend the Montana Indian Language Preservation Program	Chapter Number Assigned
HB 40	Create the reentry cultural programming grant program	Died in House Judiciary
HB 41	Extend the Cultural Integrity and Commitment Act (language immersion)	Chapter Number Assigned
HB 54	Requiring any law enforcement agency to accept a missing persons report	Chapter Number Assigned
SB 13	Allocate supportive housing grant funds to those serving American Indian offenders	Died in Senate Business, Labor, and Economic Affairs
SB 30	Allow peer support services to be reimbursed under Medicaid	Chapter Number Assigned
SB 31	Revise the Big Sky Economic Development Grant Program re: high unemployment counties	Died in Senate Business, Labor, and Economic Affairs
SB 40	Require OPI to create and maintain electronic directory photograph repository	Chapter Number Assigned
SJ 2	Request an interim study of options to break the cycle of youth who run away	Died in House Human Services

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