



Transportation Interim Committee

66th Montana Legislature

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October 30, 2019

Presiding Officer Casey Schreiner
Vice Presiding Officer Mark Blasdel
Legislative Council

Dear Rep. Schreiner and Sen. Blasdel:

The Transportation Interim Committee (TIC) has voted not to proceed with House Joint Resolution 34, which Legislative Council assigned to the committee in May. Pursuant to 5-5-217(3), MCA, the committee is notifying Legislative Council of its decision. In accordance with the statute, an interim committee may recommend to the Legislative Council that a study assigned to that committee be reassigned to another committee or not be conducted.

HJR 34 requested a study of passenger transportation services in Montana. The study was largely focused on the expansion of passenger rail service throughout the state. The TIC collected public comment on passenger rail service during its July 2019 and September 2019 meetings. The committee reviewed the 2010 State Rail Plan and invited the Department of Transportation to discuss the plan. The committee agreed that the information included in the 2010 State Rail Plan is sufficient today. The committee found that operational and financial challenges associated with accommodating expanded passenger rail service would be difficult, if not impossible, to overcome due to the fact that the lack of available federal funding would put the burden for increased funding on the state. With that information, the Transportation Interim Committee decided that further study is not needed because expansion was not financially feasible. Issues related to autonomous vehicles, and bus services, also raised in HJR 34, are being addressed in other areas of the workplan adopted by the TIC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gordon Vance".

Senator Gordon Vance
TIC Presiding Officer

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Diane Sands".

Senator Diane Sands
TIC Vice Presiding Officer