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TRANSPORTATION INTERIM COMMITTEE
67th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

Carlie Boland
Diane Sands
Gordon Vance
Jeffrey Welborn

HOUSE MEMBERS

Ross Fitzgerald
Denley Loge
Andrea Olsen
Mark Sweeney

COMMITTEE STAFF

Joe Carroll - Attorney
Bri Nordhagen - Secretary
Sonja Nowakowski -
Research Director

MINUTES LOG

January 13, 2020

9:01 AM

152

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ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Sen. Gordon Vance, Chair (R)
Sen. Diane Sands, Vice Chair (D)
Sen. Carlie Boland (D)
Rep. Ross Fitzgerald (R)
Rep. Denley Loge (R)
Rep. Andrea Olsen (D)
Rep. Mark Sweeney (D)
Sen. Jeffrey Welborn (R)

Members Excused:

Members Absent:

Staff Present:

Joe Carroll, Attorney
Bri Nordhagen, Secretary
Sonja Nowakowski, Research
Director

[\(Attachment 1\)](#) [\(Attachment 2\)](#) [\(Attachment 3\)](#)

Committee Business Summary

09:01:36 Sen. Vance

DOJ Motor Vehicle Division updates

09:01:39 Sarah Garcia

Questions and discussion from the Committee

09:08:33 Rep. Olsen asked Ms. Garcia if the committee could get a report on the transactions in the retail offices including who was doing it, how many they were doing and if they are/are not charging extra.
09:11:29 Rep. Loge asked what the total opt in moneys for trails was.
09:12:17 Sen. Welborn asked if there was anything in the future people in Montana would need to have a Real ID for if they have a passport.

Real ID Follow-up

09:15:34 Sonja Nowakowski, [\(Exhibit1\)](#)
09:18:31 Michele Snowberger

Questions from the Committee

09:23:16 Sen. Sands asked about the implementation of the Real ID and federal courts, whether are they being notified. Sen. Sands asked what level of the ID was implemented for building security.
09:26:00 Rep. Olsen asked Ms. Nowakowski if there was discussion regarding the inconsistency of the Real ID bill.

Public Comment

09:27:15 none

Motions

09:27:21 Sen. Sands moved to have some clean up legislation drafted to deal with the first issue, and to give the department discretionary authority through rule making around wavers.

Comments from the committee

09:27:39 none

DOT updates

09:27:57 Kevin Christensen, MDT Chief Operating Officer, [\(Exhibit 2\)](#)

Questions from the Committee

- 09:37:01 Rep. Loge asked about Highway 248 being closed for 40 days and why that decision was made. Rep. Loge stated a lot of people didn't like the bypass /bridge that was going to be used.
- 09:46:20 Rep. Olsen asked about the Empire Builder being closed between Williston and White Fish.
- 09:47:29 Sen. Vance asked about the potential time frame of how long the bridge/road will be closed.
- 09:47:29 Sen. Sands asked whether the county or state was maintaining that road.
- 09:49:18 Rep. Olsen asked if there were tracks along the route where the road was going to be closed. Rep. Olsen asked if there had been any thought of using that track for passenger service.
- 09:50:37 Sen. Vance asked about Kerry White's complaint regarding the paint/reflective material used on highways and how it doesn't seem to hold up. **(Exhibit 3)**

SJ 28: Traffic Safety Systems and Policy

- 09:53:54 Carol Strizich, Bureau Chief of Multimodal Planning at MDT **(Exhibit 4)**, **(Exhibit 5)**

Questions from the Committee

- 10:02:06 Sen. Sands asked about a rural transportation management program in dealing with impairment accidents happening on rural highways.
- 10:07:56 Sen. Welborn asked about percentages of crash factors and where does that fit into the study, people using phones etc.
- 10:11:04 Rep. Olsen asked about alternatives for travel and a lack thereof. Could the report look at actual alternatives for travel and incorporate that into the study.
- 10:16:00 Rep. Fitzgerald asked about the process to amend speed limit laws. Rep. Fitzgerald asked about first responders getting hit and possible education to address that. Rep. Fitzgerald asked about increased punishment for first responders getting hit.
- 10:18:36 Rep. Loge asked about the percentage of a fatality of a first offender regarding a DUI/drug related and possibly changing the treatment of a first offender. Traffic studies and needing a quick response for such information. Roundabouts and the backup of traffic, when do they decide they have failed.
- 10:21:42 Rep. Olsen asked Rep. Loge whether the roundabout was an improvement at all in his opinion.

Public Comment

- 10:23:19 Spook Stang, Motor Carriers of Montana
- 10:27:16 Doug Habermam, Bike Walk Montana
- 10:31:59 Marilee Brown, Executive Director for Safer Bozeman and Gallatin County

Questions from the Committee

- 10:35:09 Sen. Sands asked Ms. Strizich about the issue of surveillance cameras in rest areas. Sen. Sands asked if there was a plan to put cameras in all rest areas.

SJ 28: Traffic Safety Systems and Policy

- 10:39:10 Duane Williams

Questions from the Committee

- 10:49:49 Sen. Sands asked about autonomous vehicles in commercial fleets and how Mr. Williams's group is dealing with that. Sen. Sands asked if caravanning was currently going on.
- 10:53:33 Rep. Olsen asked about caravans of semi's and the safety aspect of platooning.
- 10:55:30 Sen. Vance and Rep. Loge stated they received good feedback from people who spoke to Mr. Williams.

De-icer Costs and Benefits

- 10:56:03 Sen. Brown, ([Exhibit 6](#))
- 11:03:31 Doug McBroom overview, ([Exhibit 7](#))

Questions from the Committee

- 11:15:02 Rep. Loge asked Mr. McBroom about how many wells they've had to replace in the plains and Missoula areas. Rep. Loge asked whether new employees are reviewed on using dry sand.
- 11:18:28 Rep. Sweeney asked about salt attracting game animals to the roads.

Public Comment

- 11:21:44 none

Accessibility in Montana

- 11:21:57 Sen. Sands
- 11:22:57 Joel Peden, Montana Independent Living Project, ([Exhibit 8](#))

Questions from the Committee

- 11:37:58 Sen. Sands asked Mr. Peden how he sees the split between the county and state levels and where grants would be most helpful. Sen. Sands asked about public pathways and accessibility for pedestrian walkways. Sen. Sands asked Ms. Strizitch how the department is addressing the issues presented by the disability community.
- 11:47:07 Rep. Olsen asked Ms. Strizitch if she saw her department working with cities and states regarding accessibility on sidewalks.

Lunch

- 11:50:56

Reconvened

- 13:00:03

HJ 45: Bicycle and Pedestrian

- Pathways** 13:00:15 Rep. Loge,
([Exhibit 9](#))

13:02:01 Carol Strizich overview, ([Exhibit 10](#))

Questions from the Committee

13:19:26 Rep. Loge asked Ms. Strizich about HB 225 and what were the plans for that money.

Public Comment

13:23:50 Representative Dave Fern
13:29:25 Ben Weiss, City of Missoula Bike Program Manager
13:31:21 Doug Habermam, Bike Walk Montana
13:35:58 Kristi Drake, Billings Trail Mint, ([Exhibit 11](#)), ([Exhibit 12](#))
13:38:56 Virginia Sullivan - Missoula Adventure Cycling Association
13:41:16 Marilee Brown, Chairman of GAP, Pedestrian Safety Committee Bozeman
13:44:09 Wilbur Rehmann, resident of Helena

Administrative Rule Review

13:46:47 Joe Carroll, ([Exhibit 13](#))

Questions from the Committee

13:47:54 none

Electric Bikes in Montana

13:48:05 Ms. Nowakowski, ([Exhibit 14](#))
13:50:49 Ben Weiss

Questions from the Committee

14:03:08 Rep. Loge asked Mr. Weiss whether he had any input from law enforcement regarding electronic bikes.
14:04:50 Sen. Boland asked Mr. Weiss if Missoula lets electronic bikes on the sidewalks. Sen. Boland asked if it was a city ordinance or state law.
14:06:55 Sen. Sands asked Mr. Weiss if he thought there was a need for state legislation to clean up some language for clarification.

Public Comment

14:08:29 Jeannie Sullivan, Adventure Cycling
14:10:00 Doug Habermam, Bike Walk Montana

Biodiesel Refunds Report

14:11:32 Larry Flynn, MDT Administrator, ([Exhibit 15](#))

Questions from the Committee

14:12:43 none

Administrative Matters

14:12:57 Ms. Nowakowski, [\(Exhibit 16\)](#), [\(Exhibit 17\)](#)

Committee discussion

14:18:40 Rep. Loge stated the committee might go to the bike walk conference.
14:19:22 Sen. Sands stated commercial autonomous vehicles information should be brought in. She also said information on the aviation fuel tax and on follow up report should be included at the March meeting.

Questions from the Committee

14:21:02 Rep. Olsen asked if a speaker from DC who works with the DOT for rural development could come present to the committee.
14:24:06 Sen. Welborn asked if anyone has reached out to the railroads regarding passenger service. Sen. Welborn stated it's not up to the legislature but to let the railroad figure it out themselves and go from there.

Committee discussion

14:26:11 Rep. Olsen stated the need to plan for future growth.
14:31:36 Sen. Sands stated it was a federal issue.
14:31:48 Rep. Fitzgerald stated whoever would pursue this issue would have to integrate freight trains.
14:32:33 Rep. Sweeney asked about the southern route and getting that going again. He supports getting more information.
14:33:20 Sen. Boland stated supporting getting more information from the federal government.
14:34:10 Sen. Sands stated the need for the federal delegation.
14:34:52 Rep. Olsen stated rural america was left behind.
14:37:49 Sen. Vance stated he will review this issue at a later date.

Public Comment on matters within TIC jurisdiction not on agenda

14:38:06 Rep. Sue Vinton
14:41:41 Ms. Nowakowski, [\(Exhibit 18\)](#)
14:42:15 Joe Kolman, [\(Exhibit 19\)](#)

ADJOURNMENT

14:46:51 Adjournment