



2023-2024 **DRAFT** WORK PLAN

Economic Affairs Interim
Committee

Erin Sullivan, Research Analyst

July, 2023

2023-2024 WORK PLAN

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ECONOMIC AFFAIRS INTERIM COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS

SENATORS	REPRESENTATIVES
Sen. Kenneth Bogner (R - Miles City)	Rep. Jonathan Karlen (D - Missoula)
Sen. Steve Fitzpatrick (R - Great Falls)	Rep. Joshua Kassmier (R - Fort Benton)
Sen. Shane Morigeau (D - Missoula)	Rep. Brandon Ler (R - Savage)
Sen. Mark Noland (R - Big Fork)	Rep. Jennifer Lynch (D - Butte)
	Rep. Ron Marshall (R - Hamilton)
	Rep. Nelly Nicol (R - Billings)

STAFF MEMBERS

STAFF MEMBER	TITLE	PHONE	E-MAIL
Erin Sullivan	Research Analyst	(406) 444-3594	Erin.Sullivan@legmt.gov
Jameson Walker	Attorney	(406) 444-3722	Jameson.Walker@legmt.gov
LJ Jennings	Secretary	(406) 444-3597	Lavanda.Jennings@legmt.gov

COMMITTEE WEBSITE:

<https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eaic/>

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF DRAFT WORK PLAN

This draft work plan details the Economic Affairs Interim Committee’s (EAIC or Committee) study and agency oversight duties for the interim, which runs from July 2023 through September 15, 2024. It also discusses other activities the Committee may undertake. The work plan includes tools to help the Committee determine its level of involvement in its interim study assignments and its agency and other monitoring duties.

Once adopted, the Committee’s work plan serves as a blueprint for the Committee’s activities over the interim. The final work plan reflects the Committee’s priorities, as indicated by the amount of time the Committee decides to spend on each of its tasks. Staff uses the work plan to undertake research and arrange presentations related to the Committee’s studies and other duties. Stakeholders and other members of the public use the plan to track various topics and other items of interest.

Based on decisions made at the Committee’s organizational meeting, the final work plan includes a schedule of activities for each Committee meeting.

COMMITTEE JURISDICTION

The EAIC is one of several interim committees established in section [5-5-202](#), MCA, and required to meet between legislative sessions. Interim committees are tasked with:

- 1) Reviewing administrative rules within its jurisdiction;
- 2) Conducting interim studies as assigned;
- 3) Monitoring the operation of assigned executive branch agencies;
- 4) Reviewing advisory councils and required reports;
- 5) Reviewing proposed legislation of assigned agencies;
- 6) Reviewing proposed ballot initiatives; and
- 7) Preparing bills and resolutions that committee members believe should be presented to the next Legislature.

EAIC is assigned to monitor the following executive branch agencies:

- 1) Department of Administration - Division of Banking & Financial Institutions
- 2) Department of Agriculture
- 3) Department of Commerce
- 4) Department of Labor & Industry
- 5) Department of Livestock
- 6) Department of Revenue - Alcoholic Beverage Control Division
- 7) Department of Revenue - Cannabis Control Division
- 8) Governor’s Office of Economic Development
- 9) Montana State Fund
- 10) State Auditor and Insurance Commissioner

WHAT DOES EAIC DO?

Conducts interim studies

Monitors agencies

Reviews administrative rules

Reviews advisory councils and reports

Determines member issues to examine

Reviews ballot initiatives

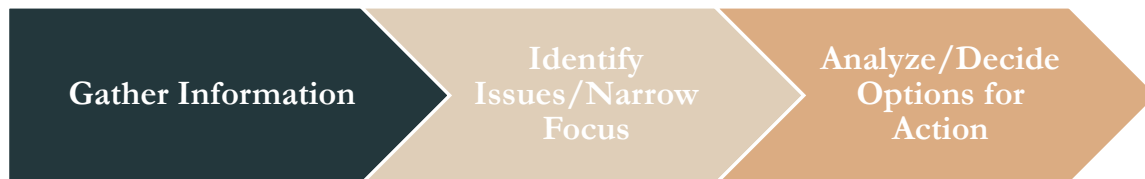
Proposes and reviews legislation

INTERIM STUDIES

The 2023 Legislature approved 6 interim study resolutions, and the Legislative Council assigned those study requests to the various interim committees on May 18, 2023. The EAIC was assigned one interim study – SJ30.

BASIC STUDY PROCESS

An interim study typically involves information gathering, issue identification, and recommendations.



The first phase of the study is carried out over the first few meetings of the interim, when the Committee:

- Reviews staff research papers and other information materials on study topics;
- Hears presentations by people with experience and expertise on various aspects of the study topics; and
- Takes public comment from interested parties, who may offer specific study-related suggestions.

In the second phase, the Committee spends a meeting or two narrowing the focus of the study. Members identify topics or questions they'd like to analyze further. This phase helps members concentrate on the issues they consider to be of the greatest importance and obtain any additional information needed to make final recommendations.

During the final stage, members review and decide on options for action. Potential solutions, including legislation, are usually reviewed, and refined at multiple meetings before the Committee takes final action.

STUDY BACKGROUND

Sponsor: Sen. Bruce Gillespie

Poll Rank: 6

According to the Agricultural Marketing Resource Center, American consumption of wine has increased from 1.95 gallons for each resident in 1998 to 2.82 gallons in 2013. Research from the University of Arkansas' Food Science Department provides that, on a per-acre basis, vineyard returns greatly exceed returns from conventional crops, creating tremendous potential for value-added marketing of wine, grapes, and their byproducts at the farm level and increasing a farmer's share of the consumer's dollar. The Department of Agriculture has authority over the agricultural aspect of vineyards, but the Department of Revenue has authority over the distribution and sale of wine in the state, creating a need for a legislative review and study of the regulatory constraints and opportunities for Montana farmers and consumers.

STUDY TASKS LISTED IN LEGISLATION

SJ30 asks the EAIC to study the issues of production and regulation of wine, winemaking, grape-growing, and the use of byproducts. The study shall examine:

- Wine production, including processes of harvesting, crushing, fermentation, clarification, packaging, labeling, and storage;
- The marketing of wine, including demographics, wine tourism, and other consumer behavior;
- Regulatory requirements and constraints as provided in Title 16, MCA and by the United States Department of the Treasury; and
- Additional licensing opportunities for wine production, manufacturing, and sales.

This study presents an opportunity for the Committee to take one or more field trips to vineyards or wineries. Potential locations for field trips include the Flathead Valley, Bitterroot Valley, or other locations as suggested by the Committee.

A preliminary analysis and study approach for the Committee is included in Appendix A.

TIME ALLOCATIONS AND POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES

The table below outlines four approaches the Committee could take to its study assignment, ranging from no action at all to significant Committee involvement, and estimates the amount of time each approach would take.

Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Committee Activities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel discussion on one or two study topics as identified by the Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review staff-provided background materials on three or four study topics as identified by the Committee Panel discussions or individual speakers on the selected topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review staff-provided background materials on all topics identified in the study resolution Review additional staff materials developed at the Committee's request Panel discussions or individual speakers on all topics in the study resolution Additional items as identified by the Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Action
Staff Deliverables			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of findings from panel discussion(s) Legislation if requested Final report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff research papers on some of the study topics as selected by the Committee Decision tools Legislation if requested Final report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff research papers on all topics identified in the study resolution Staff research materials on additional topics identified by Committee members or stakeholders Decision tools Legislation if requested Final report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
FTE Allocation			
SJ 30: 0.10 FTE	SJ 30: 0.20 FTE	SJ 30: 0.35 FTE	SJ 30: 0 FTE

AGENCY OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITIES

ADMINISTRATIVE RULE REVIEW

Interim committees are required to review administrative rule proposals of the agencies for which they have oversight responsibility. The committee's legislative attorney reviews rulemaking notices and provides regular updates, noting any rules that may be out of compliance with the Montana Administrative Procedure Act (MAPA). That law allows interim committees to:

- Obtain an agency's rulemaking records to review them for compliance;
- Submit written recommendations on adopting, amending, or rejecting a rule;
- Require that a rulemaking hearing be held;
- Require an economic impact statement relating to a rule adoption; and
- Poll the Legislature by mail to determine if a proposed rule is consistent with legislative intent.

Interim committees may also delay the adoption of proposed rules by objecting to proposals that members believe do not comply with the provisions of MAPA. Senate Bill 82, passed in 2021, allows the Speaker of the House and the Senate President to break a tie vote on any rule objection being considered by an interim committee.

Decision Point: By law, each committee meeting agenda must include an item for rule review matters. However, it is up to the Committee to decide whether to ask for a formal presentation on each rule review memorandum, or whether to have a discussion only if committee members have questions or concerns.

PROGRAM MONITORING

EAIC's program monitoring duties require specific attention to:

- Identifying issues likely to require future legislative attention.
- Identifying opportunities to improve existing laws governing the agency's operations.
- Determining whether citizen experience with the agency may be improved on through legislative action.

Decision Point: During the organizational meeting, every agency under the Committee's purview will present an introductory overview. Thereafter, it is up to the Committee to decide what agencies to focus on and how much time to allocate in its work plan for additional program monitoring activities.

LICENSING BOARD ACTIVE SUPERVISION REVIEW (HB141, 2017 SESSION)

As part of its monitoring duties to the Department of Labor and Industry, the EAIC monitors determinations as to whether any board actions are considered by the Commissioner to be anticompetitive. The Committee may initiate further hearings, backstop the Commissioner, or provide an alternative process for those alleging possible antitrust activities by boards or licensees.

MONTANA STATE FUND LEGISLATIVE LIAISONS

Under 2-15-1019, MCA, the EAIC's presiding officer is to appoint liaisons to the Montana State Fund:

2-15-1019. Board of directors of state compensation insurance fund – legislative liaisons.

...

(8) There must be two legislative liaisons to the board consisting of members of the economic affairs interim committee provided for in 5-5-223. Subject to 5-5-234, the presiding officer of the economic affairs interim committee shall appoint the liaisons from the majority party and the minority party at the first interim committee meeting.

Liaisons attend approximately four MSF meetings per year during the interim. Quarterly meetings are anticipated in March, June, September, and December. Liaisons are reimbursed for their time through a separate budget, and no committee time is dedicated to this statutory obligation.

REVIEW OF DRAFT LEGISLATION

The interim committee process allows for an early review of agency-requested legislation. Interim committees can begin reviewing proposed legislation as early as June in the year preceding the legislative session. This process frees up time for the Legislative Services Division to concentrate on legislator bill draft requests after the election. Agency bills drafted because of this process must be introduced before the 2025 legislative session begins.

REVIEW OF STATUTORILY ESTABLISHED ADVISORY COUNCILS AND REPORTS

ADVISORY COUNCIL REVIEW

Senate Bill 8 (2017) amended 5-5-215, MCA, to remove the requirement that interim committees review statutorily established advisory councils and required reports each interim and made the review discretionary. If any member of the committee requests that the EAIC review an advisory council or required report that is attached to an agency under the Committee's purview, the Committee must do so.

Among advisory councils eligible for EAIC review are:

Agency	Entity	Statutory Authority
Dept. of Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Noxious Weed Management Advisory CouncilOrganic Commodity Advisory Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">80-7-80580-11-601

Dept. of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Advisory Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-15-1816
Dept. of Labor & Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing Boards - Monitor for potential sunseting or combining 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-8-404

The following boards, committees, or other entities may contain an advisory function, but either are not specifically termed advisory councils or created statutorily. Many have not had a review since 2014. The 2023-2024 EAIC may choose to review one, none, or many:

Agency	Entity	Statutory Authority
Dept. of Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Hail Insurance • Agricultural Development Council • Alfalfa Seed Committee • Potato Advisory Committee • Pulse Crop Committee • Wheat and Barley Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-15-3003 • 2-15-3015 • 2-15-3004 • 80-11-510 • 2-15-3007 • 2-15-3002
Dept. of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Horseracing • Board of Housing • Coal Board • Hard Rock Mining Impact Board • Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities • Montana Facility Finance Authority • State Tribal Economic Development Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-15-1809 • 2-15-1814 • 2-15-1821 • 2-15-1822 • 2-15-1869 • 2-15-1815 • 90-1-131
Dept. of Labor & Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Personnel Appeals • Montana State Workforce Innovation Board • Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-15-1705 • 53-2-1203 • 2-15-1704

REPORTS

Senate Bill 57 (2021) was a major housekeeping/revision bill that, among other things, created a more standardized procedure for entities submitting statutorily required reports to the legislature. Unless otherwise directed in statute, reports to the legislature, including reports to specific interim committees, are biennial reports and need to be submitted by September 1 of the year preceding a legislative session. House Bill 400 (2023) eliminated the option for an executive agency to provide an oral report to an interim committee so beginning this interim all required reports must be provided in written form.

NEW IN 2023

In addition to the existing statutorily required reports, the following bills were passed in 2023 session that include reporting to or monitoring by the EAIC:

- **House Bill 948:** Prohibits the manufacture and distribution of synthetic marijuana products. The bill creates a temporary advisory council to review available research, data, and regulations related to synthetic marijuana products and determine if potential regulation of the products is possible in the future or if the products should continue to be banned. The advisory council must compile its findings and make recommendations in a report to the EAIC by September 15, 2024.

- **Senate Bill 53:** Revises laws relating to weights and measures fees collected by the Department of Labor and Industry. The bill requires biennial reporting to the EAIC concerning license fees and cost increases under 30-12-203, MCA – licensing of weighing devices.
- **Senate Bill 397:** Establishes the Facial Recognition for Government Use Act. The bill prohibits the use of facial recognition technology in certain instances but provides exemptions for law enforcement and state agencies under certain conditions and requires reporting by the Department of Justice and any state or local government agency using facial recognition technology to the EAIC by September 1 of each year.

Reports that are statutorily required to be submitted to the EAIC are:

Report	Entity	Deadline	Statute
Dispensing of drugs by medical practitioners (one-time)	Board of Pharmacy	9/30/2023	SB 374 (2021)
General marijuana regulation reports	CCD	9/1/2024	16-12-110
Medical marijuana registry reports	CCD	9/1/2024	16-12-532
Distressed Wood Products Industry Loan Account (annual report)	DOC	Annual	90-1-503
MT Heritage Preservation & Development Commission Administrative Rate (annual report)	DOC	Annual	22-3-1002
Coal Ash Markets and Hydrocarbon & Geology Investigation Programs	DOC	If Established	90-2-201 90-2-202
Reports concerning board attendance	DLI	9/1/2024	37-1-107
Drug registry (annual report)	Board of Pharmacy	Annual	37-7-1514
Complaints against physicians certifying medical marijuana use (annual report)	Board of Medical Examiners	Annual	16-12-532 37-3-203
Status of special revenue account	Board of Funeral Services	9/1/2024	37-19-204
Unemployment Insurance Program Integrity Act	DLI	9/1/2024	39-51-706
Montana State Fund Annual Report	MSF	Annual	5-5-223
Montana Reinsurance Association Annual Report	SAO	Annual	33-22-1308

Reports that are statutorily required to be submitted to the legislature, but may be of interest to the EAIC include:

Report	Entity	Deadline	Statute
Noxious plant report (if prepared)	Agriculture	9/1/2024	80-7-713
Board of Investments (annual report)	Board of Investments (DOC)	Annual	17-5-1650
Community Property-Assessed Capital Enhancement Program	Montana Facility Finance Authority (DOC)	9/1/2024	90-4-1303
Veterans' home loan mortgage loan reports	Board of Housing (DOC)	9/1/2024	90-6-604
Matching infrastructure planning grant awards	DOC	9/1/2024	90-6-703
Treasure State Endowment Program awards	DOC	9/1/2024	90-6-710

Apprenticeship & Training (annual reports)	DLI	Annual	39-6-101
Report on unemployment benefits for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking	DLI	Annual	39-51-2111
Interstate medical licensure compact reports	DLI	9/1/2024	37-3-356
Livestock Loss Board activities	LIV	9/1/2024	2-15-3111 - 2-15-3113
Interstate Insurance Product Regulation Compact reports	SAO	9/1/2024	33-39-101

OTHER INTERIM ACTIVITIES

MEMBER TOPICS & EMERGING ISSUES

Interim committees may take up other matters related to the agencies and topic areas they oversee. Depending on whether members put greater or less emphasis on their statutory duties related to interim studies and agency monitoring, they have more time to focus on EAIC-relevant member issues.

Decision Point: A list of member and staff proposed topics can be found in Appendix B. It is up to the Committee to decide what member topics to focus on and how much time to allocate in its work plan for these topics.

Members may propose investigation of emerging issues at any time during the interim. Agencies may also request that the Committee study an emerging issue that has resulted from court decisions, federal actions, or another cause.

Emerging issues are not necessarily member issues and may be raised by an agency or by staff. However, to be on the agenda, the presiding officer or other EAIC member must request agenda time. Staff resources are limited, so additions to a work plan must be accompanied by deletions to retain scheduling balance.

COMMITTEE BILL DRAFTS

Per 5-5-215, MCA, Interim committees “shall prepare bills and resolutions that, in its opinion, the welfare of the state may require for presentation to the next regular session of the legislature.” Senate Bill 176 (2023) revised 5-5-215 to state that:

“(2) . . . An interim committee may by vote request four bill drafts on a partisan basis and an unlimited number of bill drafts on a bipartisan basis.”

...

(4) As used in this section:

- (a) “bipartisan basis” means a vote in which members from more than one party vote to request a bill draft; and
- (b) “partisan basis” means a vote in which members from only one party vote to request a bill draft.”

REVIEW OF PROPOSED BALLOT INITIATIVES

The EAIC is required to review proposed statewide initiatives that relate to its subject area. The Legislature enacted Senate Bill 93 (SB 93) in 2023 to clarify and review the review process enacted in House Bill 651 (HB 651) in 2021. The revised law provides that a statewide initiative includes a constitutional initiative, a constitutional convention initiative, or a statutory initiative.

Section 13 of SB 93 requires the interim committee to hold a public hearing on a statewide initiative referred to the committee by the executive director of the Legislative Services Division. The committee then votes to either support or not support the placement of the proposed statewide initiative on the ballot. The petition used to gather signatures to place the statewide initiative on the ballot must include the interim committee vote. SB 93 applies to statewide initiatives submitted to the secretary of state after May 19, 2023.

The review process may result in additional committee meetings because the committee vote must be submitted to the secretary of state no later than 14 days after receipt of the final text of the statewide initiative. A complaint was filed May 26, 2023, in Lewis and Clark County District Court challenging SB 93, which may also alter the committee's work depending on the findings of the Court.

ALLOCATION OF COMMITTEE TIME

The EAIC meets several times during an interim to work on studies, statutory duties, and member topics. At the end of the interim, the committee will have developed findings and recommendations for one or more reports. The Committee may have also drafted legislation.

Committee members may want to consider these other potential activities as they finalize the work plan:

- **Travel:** Legislative Council rules state that interim committee meetings are held in the Capitol "unless otherwise designated by the presiding officer." Committees sometimes travel outside of Helena to carry out activities either related to a specific study or to the committee's general agency oversight duties. Meetings held outside of Helena generally cost more than those held in Helena, because the committee budget must also pay for the costs of staff travel. As a result, the committee may need to hold fewer meetings to accommodate the additional costs of travel.
- **Coordination with Interim Budget Subcommittee (IBC):** House Bill 497 (2021) created several interim budget subcommittees of the Legislative Finance Committee. The interim budget committees meet quarterly. If the Committee is interested in coordinating a meeting with the IBC, the proposed meeting agenda likely will need to be updated.

This agenda may change once the Committee identifies specific studies and member topics. The proposed meeting schedule and work plan timeline below includes several proposed two-day meetings in case the Committee elects to conduct field trips for studies or member topics.

PROPOSED MEETING SCHEDULE

The proposed schedule can be revised in the Committee prefers to hold more or fewer two-day meetings, hold a meeting outside of Helena, or schedule one meeting to coordinate with the interim budget committee meetings.

Date of Meeting	
Tuesday	July 11, 2023
Monday-Tuesday	September 25-26, 2023
Tuesday	November 14, 2023
Wednesday	January 17, 2024
Monday-Tuesday	March 11-12, 2024
Wednesday-Thursday	May 8-9, 2024
Thursday	June 27, 2024
Thursday	August 29, 2024

PROPOSED TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES

July 11, 2023	September 25-26, 2023	November 14, 2023	January 17, 2024	March 11-12, 2024	May 8-9, 2024	June 27, 2024	August 29, 2024
Draft work plan	Finalize work plan	Revise work plan, as necessary					
Begin statutory duties	Continue statutory duties						
Consider study resolution	Begin study / field trip	Gather background	Identify options			Consider draft findings, recommendations	Finalize findings, recommendations
Prioritize member topics	Explore member topics						
					Propose draft legislation	Review draft legislation	Approve legislation for pre-introduction
						Approve agency legislation for pre-introduction	Approve agency legislation for pre-introduction

							Receive required reports from agencies
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

APPENDIX A: SJ 30 PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

Study: SJ30 Interim Study Poll Rank: 6 of 6

Short Title: Interim study of viticulture and wine distribution and licensing regulation

Staff Recommendation: Economic Affairs Interim Committee

Preliminary Analysis

Issue(s) as listed in legislation:

Study issues of production and regulation of wine, winemaking, grape-growing, and use of byproducts, including:

- Wine production (harvesting, crushing, fermentation, clarification, packaging, labeling, storage)
- Wine marketing (demographics, wine tourism, consumer behavior)
- Regulatory requirements
- Additional licensing opportunities for wine production, manufacturing, sales

Preliminary study approach:

- Presentation and discussion of winemaking with Montana and regional wine producers, possibly University of Montana
- Presentation and discussion of applicable state and federal regulations with appropriate state and federal agencies, including Department of Revenue (Alcoholic Beverage Control Division)
- Presentation and discussion of marketing factors with appropriate wine producers and business development groups, including Departments of Agriculture and Commerce.
- Possible field trip(s) to existing wine producers (Flathead Valley, Bitterroot Valley)

Deliverables; end products:

Report with recommendations, legislation by September 15, 2024

Role for LFD or LAD staff? Yes No

Role for Executive agency? Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Revenue

Additional costs, over meetings? Yes No

Estimated LSD staff time: 720-1,440 hours

Interim FTE Equivalents

1 Interim FTE = 16.5 months = 2880 hrs.

.05 FTE = 144 hrs = 18

.10 FTE = 288 hrs = 36 days

.25 FTE = 720 hrs = 90 days

.50 FTE = 1440 hrs = 180 days

.75 FTE = 2160 hrs = 270 days

1 FTE = 2880 hrs = 360 days

APPENDIX B: MEMBER TOPIC SUGGESTIONS

The following table includes suggesting from EAIC members and staff and provides space for you to include suggestions for other topics for consideration.

Topic	Possible Issues to Explore
Previous Interim Studies	
Benefits Cliff	Follow up on last interim's Benefits Cliff study; look at a tiered system so people don't just fall off the cliff.
Facial Recognition	Monitor the implementation of SB 397 – follow up with agencies who use facial recognition to review changes in policy.
Marijuana Implementation	Now that the recreational marijuana program has been in effect for 18 months, there is more data, so the committee may consider revisiting some of the study topics from the SJ31 (2021) resolution that were not addressed.
Other?	
Agriculture	
Ag production in Montana	Leading farm commodities; family farms; farm household income compared to other household income; food prices; beef consumption; food security; ag exports; ag policy & environmental issues; ag share of overall state economy; ag related jobs; Made in Montana and Grown in Montana programs.
Synthetic marijuana testing	HB948 bans synthetic marijuana products and allows the Department of Agriculture to use their laboratories to test for synthetic marijuana products. The committee may consider monitoring the progress of this bill to include a field trip to a testing facility for a demonstration.
Ag data collection	HJ27 was a study resolution that was passed by both the House and Senate standing committees but missed its final vote in the Senate due to sine die. The study called for examination of agricultural data collection and use for the purpose of determining how the state can protect the data property rights of farmers and ranchers.
2023 Farm Bill	The federal farm bill is set to expire on September 30, 2023. The committee could monitor the progress of this legislation and its impacts on state policy, especially concerning industrial hemp, rural economic development and infrastructure growth, and agricultural workforce programs.
Other?	

Alcohol	
Alcohol sampling	Sampling of liquor by manufacturers at liquor stores; regulations – federal and state; amounts allowed; licenses needed.
3-tier alcohol system review	Overview of the 3-tier alcohol system; get the stakeholders in to solicit feedback on winners and losers from session
Alcohol bill review	Review of all the alcohol bills that passed to see if there were any conflicts; see if there are redundancies; feedback from stakeholders; any improvements needed, etc.
Other?	
Banking & Finance	
Cryptocurrency & related	Crypto, NFTs, electronic documents – several bills have been passed recently regarding the issue. Look at the topic to see what revisions may be necessary.
Other?	
Economic Development	
SB540 – Lodging Facility Use Tax changes	The committee could monitor the implementation of this bill to see how the money will now be allocated & spent. This bill includes a new loan program the committee may be interested in monitoring.
HB881 monitoring	This bill consolidated several programs at Commerce and made changes to the Big Sky Economic Development Fund. The committee may be interested in monitoring the changes made through this bill.
Montana Microbusiness Loan Program	HB898 (2023) revised requirements for small businesses for the microbusiness loan program but was tabled in Senate Finance & Claims. The committee could review possible revisions to the loan fund program for business startups and expansions.
Other?	
Gambling	
Horseracing	Board of Horseracing losing their lottery game. Can look at ways to bring in more money for this board or see if there are opportunities for more horseracing in the state.
Other?	

Housing	
HB819 implementation monitoring	HB819 allows for funding for housing programs and gives authority to the Department of Commerce and the Governor's Office of Economic Development for administration of the programs. Since both agencies are under the committee's purview, the committee may consider monitoring the implementation of this bill.
Housing affordability & availability	SJ29 was a study resolution that was passed by the Senate but did not get a hearing in the House. The study called for examination of workforce housing issues, incentives, grants, and other programs available for housing, public/private partnerships to increase supply, best practices in other states.
HOA covenants	SB300 (2019) 70-17-901; look at ways to improve
Other?	
Labor & Workforce Issues	
Childcare & the Workforce	Perhaps in conjunction with the benefits cliff topic. The committee can review legislation passed regarding childcare and look to collaborate with CFHHS to develop ideas.
Labor shortage issues	Look at Montana's labor shortage and how state policy can help with filling gaps in the labor market and promoting skilled trades.
Other?	
Marijuana	
Consumption lounges	Concept; regulations; other states practices; allow/disallow
Synthetic marijuana task force	HB948 bans synthetic marijuana products and creates a temporary task force to study synthetic marijuana products. The task force is required to provide a final report to the committee at the conclusion of the interim; however, the committee may choose to call the task force in during the interim for a progress report.
Hemp & Marijuana	There is a possibility that the 2023 Farm Bill will amend the federal definition of industrial hemp and increase the total THC concentration. The committee may wish to monitor this legislation as it may create definition conflicts in the MCA for both hemp and marijuana.
Other?	

Occupational Licensing	
Licensing law revision	HB152 was a Department of Labor agency bill that would have performed a major overhaul and cleanup of Title 37 but failed to pass the Legislature. There were discussions during the hearings that an interim review may be more appropriate first.
Review of DLI legislation implementation	DLI had significant changes to their board structures and procedures in several agency bills. The committee may consider reviewing and monitoring the implementation of several of these bills.
Other?	
Workers Compensation & Other Insurance	
Montana State Fund review	Review the most recent audit performed on the MSF; presentation by LAD; look at why MSF handles the state's residual market; look at why MSF has an "irrevocable certificate of authority".
Ambulance bill	HB828 would have authorized an ambulance provider assessment program but was vetoed. The committee could look at the reasons for the veto and discuss adaptations to the program for next session.
Regulatory sandbox bill	HB836 created a regulatory sandbox program to allow the Commissioner of Insurance to grant a variance or waiver with respect to requirements of the insurance code. The committee could monitor this new program.
Captive insurance market	Title 33, chapter 28 regulation review; premium tax rate – look at potential increase.
Other?	