



ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS INTERIM COMMITTEE

68th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

Brad Molnar
Christopher Pope
Barry Usher
Daniel Zolnikov

HOUSE MEMBERS

Laurie Bishop
Steven Galloway
Gary Parry
Katie Zolnikov

COMMITTEE STAFF

Griffin Burns - Research Analyst
Jacelyn Sterling - Secretary
Jameson Walker - Attorney

MINUTES LOG

May 22, 2024

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Helena, Montana

Please note: This document is a Minutes Log and provides annotation of the time elapsed between the beginning of the meeting and the time at which the item was presented or discussed, a motion was made, or a vote was taken. The narrative presented here is provided only as a guide to the audio or video recording of the meeting. The official discussion, motion, or vote is available on the audio or video archive of this meeting. The Legislature does not prepare a transcript of the meeting activities. The time designation may be used to locate the referenced discussion on the audio or video recording of this meeting.

Access to an electronic copy of these minutes and the audio or video recording is provided from the Legislative Branch home page at <https://leg.mt.gov>. From the home page, select the "Committees" drop down menu at the top, then select Administrative or Interim, and the appropriate committee. The written minutes log can be located by expanding the accordion menu for the date of the meeting. Links to the audio/video files can be located by selecting the Video/Audio button on the same page, then the "past/current recordings" button. From there, use the calendar to select the date of the meeting you wish to view/listen to. The written Minutes Log, along with links to the audio and video recordings, is listed by meeting date on the interim committee's web page. Each of the Exhibits is linked and can be viewed by clicking on the Exhibit of interest. All Exhibits are public information and may be printed. Please contact the Legislative Services Division at 406-444-3064 for more information.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Katie Zolnikov, Presiding Officer (R)
Sen. Christopher Pope, Vice Presiding Officer (D)
Rep. Laurie Bishop (D)
Rep. Steven Galloway (R)
Sen. Brad Molnar (R)
Rep. Gary Parry (R)

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Sen. Barry Usher (R)
Sen. Daniel Zolnikov (R)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT:

Griffin Burns, Research Analyst
Jacelyn Sterling, Secretary
Jameson Walker, Attorney

AGENDA ([Attachment 1](#))

VISITORS' LIST ([Attachment 2](#))

COMMITTEE ACTION

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

09:02:23 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov, called the meeting to order at 9:47 AM. The committee secretary took roll.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

09:03:03 Griffin Burns, Research Analyst, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

09:03:39 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov

UNIVERSAL SYSTEMS BENEFIT (USB) 2023 REPORTS- STATUTORY REQUIREMENT

09:04:18 Griffin Burns

[EXHIBT1](#)

09:15:38 Daniel Zolnikov joined the meeting.

Public Comment

09:16:09 Doug Hardy, Montana Electric Cooperatives Association (MECA)

Committee Discussion/Questions

09:18:06 Rep. Gary Parry

09:18:50 Doug Hardy, MECA

09:23:19 Rep. Steven Galloway

09:23:22 Doug Hardy

09:25:34 Vice Presiding Officer Christopher Pope

09:27:43 Griffin Burns

09:28:54 Rep. Parry Gary

09:30:48 Christopher Pope

09:31:07 Griffin Burns

09:31:48 Rep. Gary Parry

09:32:38 Rep. Laurie Bishop

09:32:54 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov

Additional Public Comment

09:33:03 Diego Rivas, Northwest Energy Coalition

Committee Discussion/Questions Continued

09:35:43 Rep. Gary Parry
09:36:33 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov
09:36:57 Griffin Burns
09:37:03 Rep. Gary Parry
09:38:06 Doug Hardy
09:40:08 Rep. Laurie Bishop
09:40:58 Vice Presiding Officer Christopher Pope
09:42:19 Sen. Brad Molnar
09:49:00 Rep. Steven Galloway
09:50:47 Vice Presiding Officer Christopher Pope
09:52:09 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov

WILDFIRE LIABILITY STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

09:53:01 Griffin Burns
09:54:03 Jameson Walker, Legislative Attorney, LSD
[EXHIBIT2](#)

Public Comment

10:14:13 Aimee Grmoljez, Crowley Fleck Law Firm, Montana Dakota Utilities
10:16:01 Mark Lambrecht, Director, Government Relations, Montana Electric Cooperatives Association (MECA)
10:18:04 Sen. Mike Cuffe, Senate District 1

Committee Discussion/Questions

10:20:06 Rep. Parry Gary
10:25:18 Rep. Steven Galloway
10:27:18 Rep. Laurie Bishop
10:28:03 Jameson Walker
10:31:42 Sen. Brad Molnar
10:32:30 Mark Lambrecht, MECA
10:35:31 Vice Presiding Officer Christopher Pope
10:37:21 Jameson Walker
10:38:13 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov

HJ6: POWER RESERVE STUDY

10:38:43 Griffin Burns
10:39:17 Mark Lambrecht, Montana Electric Cooperatives Association

Public Comment

None

Committee Discussion/Questions

10:43:15 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov

10:43:45 **Recess**
10:52:11 **Reconvene**

ENERGY REGIONALIZATION: BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION (BPA) DAY AHEAD MARKETS

10:52:35 Griffin Burns
10:53:23 Kate Wilson, State Liaison, BPA
10:56:16 Russ Mantifel, Director, BPA
[EXHIBIT3](#)

Public Comment

11:35:21 Doug Hardy, MECA
11:37:01 Sen. Mike Cuffe, Senate District 1
11:38:15 Diego Rivas, Northwest Energy Coalition
[EXHIBT4](#)

Committee Discussion/Questions

11:47:03 Vice Presiding Officer Christopher Pope
11:47:33 Russ Mantifel, BPA
11:49:28 Rep. Steven Galloway
11:50:00 Russ Mantifel
11:58:28 Rep. Gary Parry
11:58:53 Russ Mantifel
12:00:17 Vice Presiding Officer Christopher Pope
12:00:26 Rep. Laurie Bishop
12:02:05 Russ Mantifel
12:07:29 Vice Presiding Officer Christopher Pope
12:09:12 Russ Mantifel

12:13:08 **Recess for lunch.**
13:03:58 **Reconvene**

SPECIAL SELECT COMMITTEE ON ENERGY RESOURCE PLANNING AND ACQUISITION (SCERPA) UPDATE

13:04:04 Griffin Burns
13:04:54 Sen. Daniel Zolnikov, Presiding Officer, SCERPA
[EXHIBIT5](#)

Public Comment

13:17:37 Sen. Mike Cuffe, Member, SCERPA
13:21:40 Diego Rivas, Member, SCERPA
13:32:05 McKenna Sellers, Executive Director, Montana Renewable Energy Association
13:35:28 Kyle Unruh, Renewable Northwest
13:36:53 Sonja Nowakowski, Division Administrator, Air Energy and Mining, Department of Environmental Quality
13:40:09 Bruce Spencer, Montana Energy Business Alliance
13:41:17 Chris Puyear, NorthWest Energy
13:57:49 Irion Sanger, Northwest Inner Mountain Power Producers Coalition

Committee Discussion/Questions

14:03:57 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov
14:04:15 Sen. Daniel Zolnikov
14:08:15 Sen. Brad Molnar

14:14:38 Rep. Gary Parry
14:15:02 Sen. Brad Molnar
14:15:24 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov
14:16:07 Rep. Gary Parry
14:16:30 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov
14:17:32 Vice Presiding Officer Christopher Pope

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION (PSC) OVERVIEW

14:18:55 David Sander, Executive Director, PSC
[EXHIBIT6](#)
[EXHIBIT7](#)
14:21:09 Trevor Graff, External Affairs Coordinator, PSC

Public Comment

None

Committee Questions/Discussion

14:30:53 Rep. Laurie Bishop
14:32:04 Trevor Graff, PSC
14:33:09 Rep. Gary Parry
14:33:22 Trevor Graff

ENERGY ECONOMICS- THE NEW ENERGY ECONOMY

14:34:17 Griffin Burns
14:34:49 Tyler Farrell, Senior Associate, Carbon-Free Electricity, RMI
[EXHIBIT8](#)
14:57:40 Kyle Unruh, Montana & Idaho Policy Manager, Renewable Northwest
[EXHIBIT9](#)

15:13:28 Sen. Brad Molnar left the meeting.

Public Comment

15:31:24 Bruce Spencer, Montana Energy Business Alliance

Committee Questions/Discussion

15:34:59 Rep. Steven Galloway
15:35:23 Kyle Unruh
15:36:41 Vice Presiding Officer Christopher Pope
15:38:50 Kyle Unruh
15:41:22 Vice Presiding Officer Christopher Pope
15:42:24 Tyler Farrell

15:46:02 Rep. Laurie Bishop
15:48:11 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov
15:48:34 Vice Presiding Officer Christopher Pope
15:52:06 Rep. Steven Galloway
15:53:09 Tyler Farrell
15:54:24 Rep. Laurie Bishop
15:54:59 Tyler Farrell
15:56:31 Kyle Unruh
15:57:12 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE ETIC

15:58:06 None

WORK SESSION/INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF

15:58:42 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov
15:59:57 Vice Presiding Officer Christopher Pope
16:02:37 Griffin Burns
16:03:20 Rep. Steven Galloway
16:04:31 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov
16:04:40 Rep. Steven Galloway
16:06:25 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov
16:07:32 Griffin Burns
16:11:35 Rep. Laurie Bishop
16:12:17 Mark Lambrecht
16:13:06 Rep. Gary Parry
16:13:40 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov
16:14:47 Vice Presiding Officer Christopher Pope
16:15:31 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov
16:15:37 Griffin Burns
16:17:11 Rep. Steven Galloway
16:17:25 Presiding Officer Katie Zolnikov

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 15:49:53