

Greetings - The first meeting of the SJR 35 board study group will be October 12, starting at 9 a.m. and running until noon (or longer) in Room 102 of the State Capitol.

The Economic Affairs Committee has asked the study group to comment on a number of policies related to professional and occupational licensing boards and potential boards.

These policies are outlined in a decision tree under the Economic Affairs Committee website.

Given the numerous policies and the potential size of the study group, the task on October 12 will be limited to:

1) Hearing an overview from the Department of Labor and Industry on boards, types and sizes of boards, and what boards do and what the department does.

2) Reviewing the following statute-related policy questions as posed by the decision tree:

A) Can improvements be made in reference to types of boards to better meet public health, safety, welfare issues -- title or title/practice boards, quasi-judicial boards, or boards' administrative attachment?

B) How can membership composition be improved or revised to better address boards' public health, welfare, safety mandate? -- ratio of specialists on multispecialization boards and number of public members?

C) Can changes be made to improve administrative attachment -- this section (2-15-121, MCA) affects staffing, budgeting, rule adoption, quasi-judicial and quasi-legislative functions as well as report submission and representation.

3) Dividing into further study groups as needed to address the following policies at a later date:

a) investigations and enforcement/discipline

b) regulation of profession as well as practitioners

c) role of a board beyond licensing and discipline (continuing ed, impairment programs)

d) scope of practice/umbrella boards

e) board creation/dissolution.

One goal is to review the issues stated above to better determine the role of each of these issues in protecting public health, safety, and welfare. By reviewing these issues, the answers to board creation/dissolution may be more easily determined as may the question of regulation by board or by department. Please include with each response to the questions above a perspective for how a new board fits into the existing picture.

Rules for the meeting: Anyone who wishes to speak at the meeting is asked to respond by October 7 that you will be attending AND submit by October 7 written, constructive comments on one or more of the issues under section (2) above to: pmurdo@mt.gov or mail to EAIC, PO Box 201706, Helena MT 59620.

If you do not wish to speak at the meeting, you may still submit written, constructive comments on one or more of the issues under section (2).

If you do not submit written, constructive comments, please note that you will not receive time to speak at the Oct. 12 meeting.

The Department of Labor and Industry will lead off the discussion of Section (2) issues with its own comments, followed by other members of the work group.

By notifying me in advance, I will be able to tell you how long each person has to address the issues verbally. The list of speakers will be decided in the order received (after the department). All written comments will be shared. Electronic submissions are preferred.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please also respond and note in which of the policy issue groups, under section (3) above, you would like to participate.

Thank you for participating. The overall goal is for the work group to present to the Economic Affairs Committee information on how changes in policy can improve public health, welfare, and safety whether by creating a board, dissolving a board, or changing operational statutes.

Questions, comments, RSVPs to:

Pat Murdo

Legislative Services

406-444-3594 or pmurdo@mt.gov