



HB424: Study of State Budget Process & Personal Services Expenditures

68th Montana Legislature

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SENATE MEMBERS

SEN. JOHN ESP
SEN. CARL GLIMM
SEN. JANET ELLIS

HOUSE MEMBERS

REP. DAVID BEDEY
REP. LLEW JONES
REP. BILL MERCER
REP. ERIC MATTHEWS

COMMITTEE STAFF

QUINN HOLZER, Assistant Director
JULIE JOHNSON, Attorney
GRACE GIBNEY, Secretary

December 15, 2023
Room 102
Helena, Montana

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MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Llew Jones (R)
Sen. John Esp, Vice Chair (R)
Sen. Carl Glimm (R)
Sen. Janet Ellis (D)
Rep. David Bedey (R)
Rep. Eric Matthews (D)

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Rep. Bill Mercer (R)

STAFF PRESENT:

Katie Guenther, Lead Fiscal Analyst
Julia Hamilton, Fiscal Analyst,
Molly DelCurto, Fiscal Analyst
Nick VanBrown, Lead Data Analyst
Grace Gibney, Secretary

AGENDA (Attachment 1)

VISITORS' LIST (Attachment 2)

COMMITTEE ACTION

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

08:32:50 Sen. John Esp called the meeting to order.

BUDGET ANALYSIS MOCK UP):

08:33:52 Katie Guenther, Fiscal Analyst, (LFD) presented Budget Analysis Mock Up document concerning the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. Provided feedback on Quarterly Fiscal Reports.

08:43:45 Sen. Janet Ellis asked questions about structure of report, accessibility, and education for new legislators.

08:50:44 Rep. David Bedey provided feedback on budget analysis mock up. Interested in information concerning dollars per FTE.

08:54:55 Rep. Llew Jones made comments on agency FTE and the difference between people and flexibility.

2002 PERSONAL SERVICES TOOL:

09:05:12 Julia Hamilton, Fiscal Analyst, (LFD) provided 2002 Personal Services report and statistics update.

09:30:56 Sen. Carl Glimm added comments on FTE discussion.

PERSONAL SERVICES TOOL:

09:38:36 Molly DelCurto, Fiscal Analyst, (LFD) presented a personal services tool including organizational chart with FTE included.

FTE FUNDING/ FLEXIBILITY OPTIONS:

09:45:21 Katie Guenther, Fiscal Analyst, (LFD) presented Montana Employee Budgeting Options and Personal Services FTE report. Discussed reduction of FTE, establishment of budget flexibility account, vacancy savings and budget change documents. Discussion around agency budget requests.

09:57:59 Rep. Llew Jones made additional comments on FTE and agency flexibility.

10:04:45 Ryan Evans, Assistant Budget Director, (OBPP) comments on budgetary transparency.

10:19:53 Jason Harlow, Senior Budget Analyst, (OBPP) made additional comments on budgetary transparency.

10:20:47 Rep. Eric Matthews made comments on modified FTE. Asked if modified employees are given the same benefits as FTE employees.

- 10:33:50 Sen. Janet Ellis made comments on modified FTE and the differences in how agencies who are under the executive branch are budgeted in contrast to agencies outside of the executive branch.
- 10:35:31 Rep. Llew Jones responded to discussion on modified FTE

BREAK:

- 10:46:12 Reconvened at 11:01:16.

SESSION TIMING AND BUDGET/ POLICY COMMITTEE INTERACTION:

- 11:01:25 Katie Guenther, Fiscal Analyst, (LFD) presented Subcommittee Timeline and Communication- Legislative Fiscal- Policy Interaction proposal. Discussed scheduling and process.
- 11:05:15 Sen. John Esp made comments on merging policy and budget committees to discuss crossover to create better communication. Discussion on length of floor and appropriation sessions during session to foster a smoother process for the passage of HB 2 from the House to the Senate. Saturday meeting suggestion.
- 11:19:02 Rep. Bill Mercer joined the meeting.
- 11:22:51 Sen. Carl Glimm expressed potential benefits of communicating between budget and policy committee members and the importance of bridging the gap.
- 11:31:24 Sen. Janet Ellis contributed to conversation. Suggested a clear goal system alongside developing relationships during legislator training.
- 11:35:36 Rep. Bill Mercer added additional comments. Suggested bill drop deadlines, raising limit of bills going to appropriations.

HB 2 INTEGRATION WITH LAWS AND SESSION SYSTEM:

- 11:49:43 Nick VanBrown, Lead Data Analyst, (LFD) presented report on HB 2 integration and LAWS and session system. Expressed current issues with integrating bills into the legislative website and goals to improve the workings of the cross over process and discussed new format of committee reports.
- 12:00:07 Amy Carlson, Director, (LFD) added comments on HB2 website navigation and ways to help the public population navigate the current legislative website. Discussed improving access to committee and session information and other projects on budget integration. Discussed rewriting the fiscal note database.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- 12:03:33 Heather, O'Loughlin, Montana Budget, and Policy Center, (MBPC) comments on budget analysis document. Added thanks for suggested changes- specifically moving up the budget summary. Asked to consider base budget and requested adjustment table for each division of a specific agency.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS:

- 12:06:09 Katie Guenther, Fiscal Analyst, (LFD) discussed next steps for analysis on Legislative Branch funding. Options for funding split between HB 1 and HB 2 for adjusting this format to further efficiency. Explained these ideas are in the early stages of planning. Described efforts from legal and financial offices.
- 12:10:05 Sen. John Esp suggested a future meeting between high level staff, budget office and legislators to discuss utilization of the integration chart.
- 12:13:09 Rep. David Bedey suggested the establishment of a budget proposal based on organization chart questions from legislators.
- 12:16:59 Sen. Carl Glimm thoughts on legislative budget ideas including a zero-base budgeting and integrating IBC project with agencies.
- 12:19:03 Rep. Llew Jones and Rep. David Bedey made additional comments on zero base budgeting.
- 12:22:11 Rep. Bill Mercer added thoughts on zero base budget ideas. Requested common description of zero-based budget to deter confusion on this definition.
- 12:28:23 Sen. Janet Ellis asked if the committee would consider adding an additional member to HB 424 from the Democrat caucus. Suggested Sen. Shane Morigeau be added as a member.
- 12:29:39 Sen. John Esp explained association with Legislative Finance Committee and its appointment of seven HB 424 members. Described law that provides specific structure to the committee.
- 12:35:41 Amy Carlson, Director, (LFD) confirmed and explained Legislative Finance Committee rules concerning an additional member.
- 12:38:02 Rep. Bill Mercer made suggestions on limiting public testimony to 3 minutes during regular session. Suggested if written public comment is provided ahead of time; more time could be given to speak in person.
- 12:42:55 Sen. Janet Ellis added additional comments on Rep. Bill Mercers suggestions.

ADJOURNMENT:

- 12:46:05 Sen. John Esp adjourned the meeting.