



Select Committee on Corrections Facility Capacity and System Development

PO BOX 201706
Helena, MT 59620-1706
(406) 444-3064
FAX (406) 444-3036

68th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

JOHN ESP
RYAN LYNCH
KEITH REGIER
SHELLEY VANCE

HOUSE MEMBERS

JOHN FITZPATRICK
PAUL GREEN
DONAVON HAWK
BILL MERCER
PAUL TUSS

COMMITTEE STAFF

KATY CALLON, Fiscal Analyst
WALKER HOPKINS, Fiscal Analyst
RACHEL WEISS, Research Analyst
GRACE GIBNEY, Clerk

March 12, 2024
Room 172
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.

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MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sen. John Esp, Chair (R)
Sen. Ryan Lynch (D)
Sen. Shelley Vance (R)
Sen. Keith Regier (R)
Rep. John Fitzpatrick (R)
Rep. Donovan Hawk (D)

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Rep. Bill Mercer (R)
Rep. Paul Tuss (D)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT:

Kate Flavin, Fiscal Analyst
Walker Hopkins, Fiscal Analyst
Rachel Weiss, Research Analyst
Jennifer Whitt, Secretary

AGENDA (Attachment 1)

VISITORS' LIST (Attachment 2)

COMMITTEE ACTION

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:

11:05:13 Sen. John Esp called the meeting to order. Secretary took roll.

UPDATE ON STATUS OF WORKFORCE HOUSING, HB819

11:06:34 Dan Villa, Executive Director Board of Investments, provided update on status of workforce housing. Answered questions on income requirements, timeline estimates, and construction start date

BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLE

- 11:12:53 Joseph McElroy, board member of Pardons and Parole, former Chief of Staff reviewed trends of pardons and paroles. Answered questions on reasons for being incarcerated after parole, clarification on recidivism hearings
- 11:30:42 Sen Shelley Vance requested Board of Pardons and Parole to provide committee with data on inmates with different parameters
- 11:34:58 Sen John Esp requested explanation on difference between administrative review and administrative decision
- 11:37:53 Rep John Fitzpatrick asked about the timelines or statutes for timelines on when prisoners are eligible for parole
- 11:40:19 Sen Ryan Lynch requested a breakout by risk level of those incarcerated
- 11:51:31 Sen John Esp asked when FY 2024 numbers would be available
- 11:53:01 Mark Blasdel, Director of Economic Development for the Governor's Office of Economic Development, presented on HB 819

MONTANA COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

- 11:56:54 Amy Tenney, President of Montana Community Corrections, started presentation on overview of facilities, operations, and capacity changes
- 12:08:21 Alan Scanlon, Executive Director Great Falls Pre-Release Center, continued presentation
- 12:21:01 Amy Tenney, President of Montana Community Corrections, and Alan Scanlon, Executive Director Great Falls Pre-Release Center, answered questions on breakdown of population, educational capabilities, drug offenses, mental health and how success rate is measured. Additionally answered questions on staff retainment and operational costs

PUBLIC COMMENT

- 12:34:40 Amy Nerison, Missoula Correctional Services, available for questions/comments.
- 12:35:15 Sue Wilkons, Executive Director of Missoula Correctional Facility, via Zoom, stated she is available for any questions or for further details/information.
- 12:36:52 Sen John Esp asked in there were federal clients utilizing facilities in Montana

BREAK

- 12:38:06 Reconvened at 13:29:45
- 13:30:23 Rep John Fitzpatrick recounted tour he participated in with Arizona Correctional Facility
- 13:33:50 Sen Shelley Vance asked about the capacity of the facility Rep John Fitzpatrick toured.

CORECIVIC

- 13:34:14 Andrea Evans, Senior Director of CoreCivic, provided brief overview of CoreCivic functioning
- 13:37:21 Sen Keith Regier asked if there are any federal residents at the Crossroads location
- 13:38:01 Andrea Evans, Senior Director of CoreCivic, extended offer to committee to tour facility

DEPT OF CORRECTIONS AND DLR GROUP

- 13:39:33 Brian Gootkin, Director of Department of Corrections, Andrew Cupples, DLR Group, Tony Ewalt, Sletten Construction, provided presentation on project status update. Answered questions about chosen layout, future vision of facility, infrastructure, and flexibility of security levels.
- 14:20:15 Sen Keith Regier asked how the current population of medium and high-risk inmates in the low side is affecting the facility's staff
- 14:21:22 Rep John Fitzpatrick offered commentary on the original building of buildings A, B, and C and offered positive feedback in how Department of Corrections Team has handled overpopulation
- 14:23:00 Sen Keith Regier asked if current high side is being upgraded

PUBLIC COMMENT

- 14:25:42 None

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

- 14:26:28 Walker Hopkins, Fiscal Analyst LFD, discussed next meeting, possible Zoom meeting to finalize vote.

- 14:30:14 Sen Ryan Lynch requested more data on future population projections
- 14:32:48 Sen Ryan Lynch proposed researching other state policies that could affect population
- 14:33:35 Sen John Esp requested data on trend in upswing of more violent offenders and to look at projections

ADJOURNMENT

- 14:36:46 Sen John Esp adjourned the meeting.