

The Economic Affairs Interim Committee took the following actions at its October 28, 2005, meeting:

- heard various viewpoints on identity theft and suggested putting on the agenda for the Feb. 10 meeting a discussion of speedier removal of social security numbers from state health insurance cards;
- heard about the complexities and potential costs of common fund workers' compensation cases;
- heard an update about activities at the Department of Labor and Industry, including the department's efforts to keep pace with the high demand for building permits, use of the Montana Conservation Corps to help retrofit homes eligible for LIEAP (low income energy assistance program), implementation of the independent contractor legislation, changes to a resource-based value system for workers' compensation medical fee schedules; use of Montana offices to help victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita as they file for unemployment; approval from the U.S. Department of Labor for a waiver that allows Montana to change its program to a single-area coverage;
- appointed a subcommittee (Sen. Vicki Cocchiarella, chair, Rep. Tom McGillvray, and Rep. Mike Milburn) to work with the work group dealing with professional and occupational licensing boards;
- received a letter from Governor Brian Schweitzer about his concerns regarding the Montana Equity Capital Investment Act and heard responses from venture capital representatives and economic development officials who described projects that would benefit from Montana implementing the act.
- voted to send a letter to Governor Schweitzer saying the Committee believes SB 133 is constitutional and that the monetary issues can be addressed.
- heard concerns about actions taken to implement the Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund and that a limit on employees would not be included in the application fee.
- heard concerns about a proposed Board of Medical Examiners' rule on medical assistants.

The next EAIC meeting is February 10, 2006.