

ARRA Subcommittee

Proposed oversight plan:

ARRA was established to provide states fiscal relief as well as stimulate local economies in order to decrease the impact of the recession on business and citizens alike. The main vehicle for this spending in Montana is HB 645. This bill contains \$1.32 billion in authority to jump start economic recovery. To assure progress towards recovery, the subcommittee may wish to monitor the following items:

1. Assure those affected by the recession are being help by monitoring participation and expenditures related to programs such as unemployment compensation, food stamps (SNAP), and weatherization programs.
2. Assure that the funds get to the ground in a timely manner by analyzing the monthly report released by the Governor's office. This report provides detailed information to track areas where expenditures are slower that normal, or projects are behind schedule.
3. Assure that the largest areas of expenditures, health and human services, education, transportation and workforce are monitored on a routine basis and future funding issues are addressed.
4. Assure that investment in stimulus programs has created jobs or saved jobs. This would be accomplished through tracking of economic indicators such as labor pool, unemployment rates, and super sector employment counts.
5. Assure that legislative intent of new programs is being implemented through program review. This could include review of program materials and expenditures.
6. Assure that the public has adequate information and adequate opportunity to comment on stimulus funding. This would be accomplished through a legislative website with ties to recovery.mt.gov, and/or public hearings.

In completing this monitoring the staff of the LFD will raise issues for the subcommittee to review, or act upon on an as needed basis. The subcommittee could accomplish this by meeting on a monthly basis to review the six points of the monitoring plan. Follow up activities could be completed by the subcommittee or referred to another interim committee for additional, perhaps more intense, oversight.