

Montana Legislative Services Division
2017-2018 Interim Committee Reports

Children and Families Interim Committee

[HJR 17: Prescription Drug Pricing](#)

- A final report concluding its work on the House Joint Resolution 17 study of prescription drug pricing. The committee found that Montana state agencies that administer health care programs have taken steps to reduce the impact of rising drug prices. Members also said state agencies should continue to review options for further action and consider proposing legislation to reduce drug prices or make costs more transparent if they believe legislation is necessary.

[HJR 20: Health Care Price Transparency](#)

- A final report concluding its work on the House Joint Resolution 20 study of health care price transparency. The presiding officer appointed a 15-member subcommittee of legislators and stakeholders to carry out the work on this study. The subcommittee decided against recommending any legislation for the 2019 session but noted that individual legislators may want to clarify the consumer's responsibility for out-of-network bills and balance bills, often referred to as "surprise medical bills." The subcommittee also recommended that the full committee support the maturing of the Montana Health Insurance Exchange currently being developed by a number of health care and health insurer stakeholders. The committee accepted the recommendation.

[HJR 24: DD Services for Adults](#)

- A final report concluding its work on the House Joint Resolution 24 study of community services for adults with developmental disabilities.

Economic Affairs Interim Committee

[Examining Medical Scope of Practice to Better Serve Communities and Veterans: Final SJR 32 Report](#)

- A final report for the SJR 32 study entitled "Examining medical scopes of practice to better serve communities and veterans."

[The Future of Montana State Fund: As referenced by the SJR 27 study](#)

- A final report for the SJR 27 study of workers' compensation in Montana, which focused on the future of Montana State Fund.

[Unemployment: Barriers in High-Poverty Areas Examined Under SJR 20](#)

- A final report for the SJR 20 study of unemployment in high-poverty counties.

Education

[HJ 1 Study of Funding for Educational Programs Serving Students with Special Needs](#)

- A final report summarizing its HJ 1 study on the costs of educational programs serving students with special needs

Energy and Transportation Interim Committee

[HJ 28 Natural Gas Customer Choice: Montana's Path Forward](#)

- A final report concluding its work on House Joint Resolution 28 “Natural Gas Customer Choice: Montana’s Path Forward”. Committee members found that determining the specific cost to consumers resulting from the implementation of natural gas customer choice in the Montana-Dakota Utility service territory is made difficult by the fluid nature of the natural gas market. MDU, in information provided to the ETIC, detailed a cost estimate for allowing choice, stating that any additional costs would be passed down to all MDU consumers. The ETIC also reviewed the importance of consumer protection laws and efficiency requirements. ETIC members voted against proposed interim committee legislation that would require customer choice in the MDU service territory or allow the PSC to open customer choice in the MDU service territory.

[SJ 31 Utility Decoupling: Montana Considerations](#)

- A final report concluding its work on Senate Joint Resolution 31 “Utility Decoupling: Montana Considerations”. Committee members found that most states enact decoupling policy on an individual utility basis at the PSC level. The committee stated that the information compiled in the report could be helpful in considering future legislative options for decoupling and voted against drafting legislation on the topic.

Environmental Quality Council

[Can't Let Sleeping Dog Lie: A Study of Bird Dog Regulations](#)

[Natural Heritage Program Tracks plants, animals; searches for funding](#)

[SJ 5: Coal in Montana Changing Times Challenging Times](#)

- “Coal in Montana, Changing Times, Challenging Times” is the study required by SJ 5. The study found that coal remains a significant source of revenue for the state and Montana should continue to explore opportunities for its coal.

[Tracking the Spread: SJ9 Keeps Tabs on CWD Fight](#)

- “Tracking the Spread: SJ 9 Keeps Tabs on CWD Fight” is a culmination of the council’s work examining chronic wasting disease, which kills deer, elk, and moose. The council recommends that the state should establish a laboratory in Montana that can test for CWD and should pursue federal funds for that endeavor.

Law and Justice Interim Committee

[HJ 6 \(2017\) Study Summary](#)

- A summary of the committee’s activities on the HJ 6 study of meth use and opioid abuse in Montana.

[SJ 25 Final Report: Studying Solitary Confinement in Montana](#)

- A final report for its main interim study: the SJ 25 study on the use of solitary confinement in Montana.

Local Government

[SJ 21: Preserving and Improving the Future of Volunteer Fire and Emergency Services in Montana](#)

- Findings and recommendations in the report include the following legislative proposals:
 - LCVFF1: Require workers' compensation coverage for all volunteer firefighters starting in 2021.
 - LCVFF2: Allow emergency care providers to offer community-integrated health care.
 - LCVFF3: Establish a 5% fireworks tax to generate \$250,000 per year designated for assisting local fire agencies with workers' compensation for volunteer fire fighters and the remainder of the revenue for emergency medical and trauma services grants. The bill is effective October 2019 and terminates September 2023.

Revenue and Transportation Interim Committee

[HJ 18 Study of Tax Increment Financing Final Report](#)

- A final report for the House Joint Resolution 18 study of tax increment financing (TIF) that includes materials provided throughout the interim on taxable values of districts that use TIF, bonds secured with TIF, neighboring states' use of TIF, and a summary of TIF recommendations from a performance audit. The committee did not advance the three bill drafts reviewed at the July meeting.

[HJ 22 Agricultural Property Taxation Draft Study Final Report](#)

- A final report for the House Joint Resolution 22 agricultural property taxation study includes a history of agricultural classification in Montana and an overview of agricultural classification in neighboring states. The report will be updated after the September meeting to reflect the outcome of the three requested bills.

[SJ 23 Study of Taxation of Centrally Assessed and Utility Property Final Report](#)

- A final report for the Senate Joint Resolution 23 study of centrally assessed and utility property includes an overview of the classification, assessment, and taxation of centrally assessed property in Montana and selected states, information on the tax tracker policy, appeal procedures, and background on the intangible personal property exemption.

State Administration and Veterans' Affairs

- A final report reviewing Elections Accessibility for Disabled Electors and Cybersecurity for All. (Will be posted after Tuesday meeting)
- A Legislator’s Guide to Montana’s Public Employee Retirement Systems. (Will be posted after Tuesday meeting)

State Tribal Relations

[Addressing an Epidemic: Missing and Murdered Indian Women](#)

- A report concluding the STRC’s work on missing persons, human trafficking, and violence against women in Indian Country

[Helping Montana's Poorest-Performing Students: English Learners](#)

- A report concluding the STRC’s work on improving Indian student achievement “Helping Montana’s Poorest Performing Students: English Learners

[SJ 3: Improving Reentry Outcomes for American Indian Offenders](#)

- A report concluding the STRC’s work on Senate Joint Resolution 3 “Improving Reentry Outcomes for American Indian Offenders”

[State Tribal Relations Committee Final Report to the 66th Montana Legislature](#)

- Perhaps the most important responsibility of the STRC is to act as a liaison between the state and the eight tribal governments of Montana. Historically, the STRC has visited two to four reservations per interim in fulfilling this duty. This interim, the STRC visited the Northern Cheyenne and Crow Reservations in September 2018, the Fort Belknap Reservation in May 2018, and with the Little Shell Tribal Council in Great Falls in May 2018. The decisions about which tribal governments to visit and when are up to the committee’s discretion and subject to coordination with the respective tribal government.

Study of State Labs at Montana State University

[HB 661 Study of State Labs](#)

Water Policy Interim Committee

[A Right to Stream Conditions as they Existed: A Study of the Process for Changing a Water Right](#)

- A final report on WPIC’s study of exempt groundwater wells. The report displays the current regulatory landscape for exempt groundwater wells and contemplates the history of the policy and science surround this issue. It also describes committee discussions and actions.

[The Exemption at 45: A study of Groundwater Wells Exempt from Permitting](#)

- A final report concluding WPIC’s study of the process for changing a water right.

