

Week two of the Legislature is now behind us. Here are the developments. To wit:

The pace of the bills considered picked up considerably. The Legislature will only get more busy with each day that passes.

1. MWGA BILLS:

The Senate Agriculture committee considered and heard SB 73, our bill to renew the appropriation for the livestock loss board and for predator control at the Board of Livestock.

The hearing was widely attended, and our bill was supported by a number of diverse groups. Supporters of our bill ranged from MACO to wolves of the Rockies to the NRDC.

Because of this wide range of support, ranging from agriculture interests to environmental interests, I feel fairly confident our bill will clear the Senate Agriculture committee and likely clear the Senate.

We will need an amendment in the House of Representatives to take care of the problem created by the Governor's budget office in that the livestock loss board is unable to spend about \$164,000 for livestock-grizzly conflict prevention purposes in the current year. The Governor has alleged that the livestock loss board does not have the budget authority to spend that money.

The House has to act because it has to start budget authority, not the Senate.

I expect our bill to be on the floor of the Senate by the end of this week.

2. OTHER BILLS WATCHED.

- a. MWGA opposed a water related bill this week that would authorize the water court to deem water rights abandoned administratively if water rights transfers are not done and filed correctly. MWGA opposes this bill on the grounds that water rights owners should not be punished for what could possibly be an administrative issue created by a mistake by the DNRC or a realtor.
- b. MWGA supported a bill this week that would lift the cap on the aggregate amount of money that could be paid to a landowner under the block management program.
- c. MWGA monitored a bill this week where landowners willing to enter into a contract with Fish, Wildlife and Parks to allow public elk hunting on their property would be eligible for free elk hunting licenses under a bill that revises a measure already on the books.

3. MWGA LEGISLATIVE EVENTS –

- a. The MWGA will participate in an AG welcome reception on January 16th, where we will introduce our association to the legislators.
- b. MWGA's capital day will be February 8th in Helena. I strongly encourage you to attend this event if you can. We will be hosting a lunch for the legislators at the Capitol that day.
- c. MWGA presented to the agriculture coalition this past week detailing our legislative priorities – the ag coalition consists of legislators who design to promote agriculture at the Legislature.

4) UPCOMING HEARINGS/BILLS

Monday – January 16 – Legislative Day 11

Senate Business, Labor, and Economic Affairs – Room 422, 10am

[SB69](#) – Create task force to study public employee health benefits (Mary Moe)

Senate Natural Resources – Room 303, 3pm

[SB42](#) – Revise the major facility siting act (Dick Barrett)

Senate Public Health, Welfare and Safety – Room 317, 3pm

[SB83](#) – Volunteer Health Services Act (Roger Webb)

[SB96](#) – Right to shop act for health care services (Cary Smith)

House Business and Labor – Room 172, 8:30am

[HB169](#) – Raise minimum wage in Montana (Mary Ann Dunwell)

[HB179](#) – Clarify failure to return rental-purchase item not subject to criminal liability (Jean Price)

[HB223](#) – Revise laws relating to title insurance (Geraldine Custer)

House Education – Room 137, 3pm

[HB119](#) – Revise quality educator loan assistance program (Seth Berglee)

[HB161](#) – Revise laws related to state funding of higher education (Jacob Bachmeier)

[HB185](#) – Establish grant program to eliminate tuition for certain postsecondary programs (Shane Morigeau)

House Energy, Technology, and Federal Relations – Room 472, 3pm

[HB21](#) – Establish benefits and retirement security task force (Jim Keane)

[HB22](#) – Appropriate money to assist/intervene/plan for closure of coal-fired generation (Jim Keane)

House Human Services – Room 152, 3pm

[HB177](#) – Revise administration of immunization laws (Janet Ellis)

[HB195](#) – Revise laws related to pharmacies and prescription drugs (Kenneth Holmlund)

[HB201](#) – Provide for appointment of court-appointed special advocate as guardian ad litem (Rob Cook)

House Judiciary – Room 137, 8am

[HB62](#) – Department of Revenue to collect fees for public defender services (Randy Brodehl)

[HB70](#) – Strengthening guardianship services and creating a WINGS group (Jessica Karjala)

[HB77](#) – Revise public defender system and provide for a director hired by governor (Randy Brodehl)

House Natural Resources – Room 172, 3pm

[HB124](#) – Require education program for water commissioners (Sharon Stewart-Peregoy)

[HB140](#) – Clarify water commissioner appointments (Sharon Stewart-Peregoy)

[HJ3](#) – Interim study of water right change process (Zach Brown)

House Transportation – Room 455, 3pm

[HB152](#) – Authorize counties to establish junk vehicle capital improvement funds (Tom Welch)

[HB180](#) – Restrict cell phone use in work and school zones (Denley Loge)

[HB205](#) – Revise tax laws related to vehicles (Alan Redfield)

Tuesday – January 17 – Legislative Day 12 – Last day to request General Bills and Resolutions

Senate Business, Labor, and Economic Affairs – Room 422, 8am

[HB125](#) – Revise workforce investment act to implement federal changes (Willis Curdy)

Senate Energy and Telecommunications – Room 317, 3pm

[SB93](#) – Provide notification at certain dwellings for oil and gas operations (Tom Richmond)

[SB101](#) – Repeal ethanol mandate (Tom Richmond)

Senate Finance and Claims – Room 303, 1:30pm (or upon Senate Floor session adjournment)

[SB88](#) – Create a build Montana trust fund (Jon Sesso)

Senate Judiciary – Room 303, 8am

[SB59](#) – Generally revise criminal justice laws (Cynthia Wolken)

[SB60](#) – Generally revise criminal justice laws (Cynthia Wolken)

[SB61](#) – Require certain facilities providing behavioral health services to be licensed by DPHHS (Cynthia Wolken)

[SB63](#) – Revise laws related to supervision of offenders/defendants (Cynthia Wolken)

[SB64](#) – Generally revise laws related to the board of pardons and parole (Cynthia Wolken)

House Business and Labor – Room 172, 8:30am

[HB210](#) – Revise liquor laws to clarify distance requirements with respect to schools (Mary Ann Dunwell)

[HB218](#) – Revise timelines for credit reporting (Bradley Hamlett)

[HB222](#) – Revise laws related to insurance and storm damage repairs (Dennis Lenz)

House Fish, Wildlife and Parks – Room 152, 3pm

[HB154](#) – Limit use of exploding targets on public land (Willis Curdy)

[HB183](#) – Remove termination date on outfitter assistant laws (Kelly Flynn)

[HB214](#) – Generally revise laws related to Fort Peck hatchery (Bob Brown)

House Judiciary – Room 137, 8am

[HB194](#) – Prohibit local restrictions on electronic devices while driving (Jeremy Trebas)

[HB206](#) – Revise laws regarding crimes (Daniel Zolnikov)

[HB217](#) – Revise replacement schedule for regular license plates (Randy Brodehl)

House Local Government – Room 172, 3pm

[HB221](#) – Revise laws related to public records of municipalities (Donald Jones)

House State Administration – Room 455, 9am

[HB50](#) – Require disclosure of dates of certain campaign contributions (Wendy McKamey)

[HB186](#) – Revise independent candidate filing laws (Forrest Mandeville)

[HB199](#) – Revise legislator constituency fund laws (Dave Fern)

Wednesday – January 18 – Legislative Day 13

Senate Business, Labor, and Economic Affairs – Room 422, 8am

[SB75](#) – Establish a Montana trade center in Calgary (Dee Brown)

[SB108](#) – Prohibit enforcement of a right of first refusal in auto franchise contracts (Gordon Vance)

Senate Education and Cultural Resources – Room 422, 3pm

[SB103](#) – Clarify education laws related to minimum aggregate house and proficiency (Llew Jones)

[HB113](#) – Allow Indian language immersion program funds to be used as matching funds (Edward Greef)

Senate Judiciary – Room 303, 8am

[SB65](#) – Generally revise laws regarding housing options for offenders (Cynthia Wolken)

[SB66](#) – Generally revise the crime victims compensation act (Cynthia Wolken)

[SB67](#) – Generally revise offender intervention program laws (Cynthia Wolken)

[SJ3](#) – Interim study of tribal resources for mbrs involved in criminal justice system (Cynthia Wolken)

Senate Natural Resources – Room 303, 3pm

[SB48](#) – Direct DEQ to assume dredge-and-fill permitting program (Chas Vincent)

Senate Public Health, Welfare and Safety – Room 317, 3pm

[SB82](#) – Generally revise laws on Medicaid overpayment audits (Albert Olszewski)

[SB100](#) – Authorize direct primary care provider plans (Cary Smith)

House Business and Labor – Room 172, 8:30am

[HB229](#) – Allowing worker to choose treating physician in workers' compensation cases (Andrea Olsen)

House Education – Room 137, 3pm

[SB5](#) – Revise INTERCAP loan program (Tom Facey)

[HB190](#) – Establish grant program for early grades dual language immersion programs (Dave Fern)

[HB192](#) – Raise legal dropout age to 18 or upon graduation (Dave Fern)

House Energy, Technology, and Federal Relations – Room 472, 3pm

[HB219](#) – Revise net metering laws (Zach Brown)

House Human Services – Room 152, 3pm

[HB23](#) – Provide for suicide prevention among American Indian and rural youth (Jonathan Windy Boy)

[HB153](#) – Require DPHHS to seek a waiver to prohibit using SNAP benefits for energy drinks (Vince Ricci)

[HB163](#) – Provide for a Montana caregiver act (Geraldine Custer)

House Judiciary – Room 137, 8am

[HB208](#) – Provide that it is unlawful to retaliate against public whistleblowers (Kirk Wagoner)

[HB231](#) – Generally revise criminal law (Peggy Webb)

House Natural Resources – Room 172, 3pm

[HB211](#) – Require sage grouse population report (Bradley Hamlett)

House State Administration – Room 455, 9am

[HB81](#) – Revise publication and distribution requirements for MAR and ARM (Willis Curdy)

[HB103](#) – Generally revise election laws – administrative cleanup (Geraldine Custer)

[HB162](#) – Provide appropriation for purple heart scholarship program (Rae Peppers)

House Taxation – Room 152, 8am

[HB156](#) – Extend statutory appropriation from hard rock mining impact trust account (Forrest Mandeville)

[HB171](#) – Exempt military pensions from state income tax (Jeremy Trebas)

[HB175](#) – Revise laws related to medical savings accounts (Jim Hamilton)

House Transportation – Room 455, 3pm

[HB144](#) – Generally revise motor vehicle laws (Zach Brown)

[HB196](#) – Institute vehicle registration fee for volunteer EMS (Becky Beard)

Thursday – January 19 – Legislative Day 14

Senate Energy and Telecommunications – Room 317, 3pm

[SB11](#) – Require PSC review of net metering interconnection (Pat Connell)

[SB12](#) – Update the PSC’s role in reviewing net metering standards (Pat Connell)

[SB36](#) – Eliminate the electrical licensing exemption for grid-tied generation (Duane Ankney)

Senate Judiciary – Room 303, 10am

[SB45](#) – Revise drug and mental health treatment court laws (Margaret MacDonald)

[SB71](#) – Provide for an intervention hearing for parolees (Jen Gross)

[SJ4](#) – Interim study of crossroads correctional center (Margaret MacDonald)

House State Administration – Room 455, 9am

[HB182](#) – Declaration of policy regarding foster parents and foster children (Frank Garner)

[HB207](#) – Revise number and time period for campaign reports (Bryce Bennett)

House Taxation – Room 152, 8am

[HB209](#) – Extend funding to Coal Board (Barry Usher)

[HB215](#) – Revise oil and gas tax laws (Mary Ann Dunwell)

Friday – January 20 – Legislative Day 15

Senate Education and Cultural Resources – Room 422, 3pm

[SB114](#) – Revise postsecondary scholarships to address teacher pipeline (Mary Moe)

[SB115](#) – Revising stipends for national board certified teachers (Mary Moe)

Senate Judiciary – Room 303, 9am

[SB107](#) – Provide liability limits for emergency care by volunteer emergency responders (Douglas Kary)

[SB113](#) – Providing for disclosure of child and family services records to legislators (Frederick Moore)

[SB117](#) – Revise laws relating to executing power of attorney for a minor (Roger Webb)

House Judiciary – Room 137, 8am

[HB147](#) – Requiring search warrant for gov access to electronic devices (Daniel Zolnikov)

[HB148](#) – Generally revise privacy laws (Daniel Zolnikov)

[HB149](#) – Revise privacy laws regarding license plate scanners (Daniel Zolnikov)