

From the desk of Jim Brown, Public Affairs

Week one of the Legislature is in the books and there have been some developments. To wit:

1. The Governor made nominations for the positions of head of FWP and Department of Agriculture;
 - a) For FWP, the Governor nominated University of Montana law professor Martha Williams. Based on Williams' long environmental record, she is not going to be friendly to landowners, and may be the worst director yet for our interests.
 - b) For Dept. of AG, the Governor nominated Ben Thomas, a former U.S. Department of Agriculture employee and a former Baucus staffer. The other ag groups seem to think he will be an adequate director.

The story is linked here:

http://missoulian.com/news/government-and-politics/gov-bullock-announces-more-cabinet-appointments/article_887184c3-a107-5f12-a800-a36831ba6498.html

2. MWGA's livestock loss bill is up for hearing this coming week.

As you will recall, in the 2013 legislative session, MWGA secured general fund monies to fund the livestock loss board. Prior to our efforts, the livestock loss board was struggling financially, relying primarily on grants to carry out its mission. However, the authorization for the funding expires as of June 30, 2017.

It's hard to believe that four years have passed, and it is time for MWGA to work to renew this important source of funding. But, that is where we are.

Our bill, SB 73, will be heard in the Senate Agriculture Committee on Thursday at 3:00PM. I am optimistic that it will make it through the Legislature; whether it makes it across the Governor's desk is another matter.

3. Bills discussed during the previous week

- A. The legislature considered a bill being pushed by the water court that would authorize the water court to hear appeals of water permit decisions made by the DNRC. As it stands now, the county district court is the court that hears a challenge to a DNRC water permitting decision. MWGA did not take a position on this bill as we don't have a policy on it.
- B. The Legislature also considered a bill regarding pesticide licensing and registration requirements, hb 126. MWGA is keeping an eye on this bill.

4. 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. We will be hosting a lunch for the legislators at the Capitol that day.

5. UPCOMING BILLS -- HEARINGS

Monday – January 9 – Legislative Day 6

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

SB54 – Revise laws related to approval of accounting system for state contractors (Jen Gross)

Senate Natural Resources – Room 303, 3pm

SB24 – Modify commercial leasing rental provisions for state lands (Jeffrey Welborn)

SB46 – Revise laws on forest reserve money kept in state treasury (Chas Vincent)

Senate Public Health, Welfare and Safety – Room 317, 3pm (Hearings will begin following adjournment of Senate Floor Session)

SB4 – Eliminate certain DPHHS advisory councils and reports (Diane Sands)

SB31 – Require Medicaid reimbursement for drug therapy management (Albert Olszewski)

SB62 – Certification for behavioral health peer support specialists (Cynthia Wolken)

Senate State Administration – Room 335, 3pm

SB13 – Revise board of horseracing executive secretary duties (Steve Fitzpatrick)

SB40 – Generally revise laws related to legislative broadcasting services (Jon Sesso)

SB43 – Generally revise laws governing the long-range building program (Jon Sesso)

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

HB26 – Revise board of housing loan-servicing laws (Tom Welch)

HB132 – Revise unemployment insurance laws (Nate McConnell)

HB141 – Provide licensing boards with active supervision in antitrust liability cases (Ryan Lynch)

House Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services – Room 102, 8am

HB2 – General Appropriations Act (Nancy Ballance) (Biennial Medicaid report and Overview of 2019 – Biennium Medicaid Estimates)

House Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Natural Resources and Transportation – Room 317C, 8:30am

HB2 – General Appropriations Act (Nancy Ballance) (Work session on Personal Services; Department of Transportation)

House Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government – Room 350, 9am

HB2 – General Appropriations Act (Nancy Ballance) (Department of Administration – Director's Office, State Financial Services Division; Architecture and Engineering Division; State Information Technology Services Division rate setting process)

House Joint Appropriations Subcommittee Judicial Branch, Law Enforcement and Justice – Room 317A, 9am

HB2– General Appropriations Act (Nancy Ballance) (Office of State Public Defender submitted budget)

House Joint Appropriations Subcommittee Education – Room 472, 9:30am

HB2 – General Appropriations Act (Nancy Ballance) (Board of Public Education Agency Budget)

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

HB34 – Increase net metering cap for certain customer generators (Daniel Zolnikov)

HB52 – Grandfather existing customer-generator net metering rates (Daniel Zolnikov)

HB61 – Revise and update 9-1-1- laws (Frank Garner)

House Human Services – Room 152, 3pm

HB71 – Require certain licensed health professionals be trained in suicide prevention (Wendy McKamey)

HB84 – Allow for biennial county matching grants for mental health crisis intervention (Jessica Karjala)

HB105 – Allow Board of Physical Therapy Examiners to join multistate license compact (Frank Garner)

House Judiciary – Room 137, 8am

HB58 – Require public defender workload assessment study (Kimberly Dudik)

HB59 – Require public defender for putative father in neglect cases (Kimberly Dudik)

HB109 – Require every applicant for public notary to pass an exam (Jean Price)

House Natural Resources – Room 172, 3pm

HB38 – Revise allowable harvest volume for certain state land timber harvest (Willis Curdy)

HB48 – Clarify definition of water right change (Bob Brown)

HB49 – Clarify process for updating water right transfers (Bob Brown)

House Transportation – Room 455, 3pm

HB41 – Revise laws related to oversized loads to comply with federal law (Jim Keane)

HB55 – Revise department of transportation property transfer laws (Denley Loge)

HB146 – Revising temporary roadblock laws (Daniel Zolnikov)

Tuesday – January 10 – Legislative Day 7

Senate Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation – Room 335, 3pm

SB55 – Revise nursery licensing, fees, inspections, and penalties (Daniel Salomon)

SB73 – Revise laws related to livestock loss (Pat Connell)

Senate Business, Labor, and Economic Affairs – Room 303, 8am

SB44 – Provide process to hold patients harmless from balance billing by air ambulance (Gordon Vance)

SB77 – Revise title insurance requirements in tax deed laws (Nels Swandal)

Senate Energy and Telecommunications – Room 317, 3pm

SB1 – Generally revise net metering laws (Pat Connell)

SB7 – Generally revise net metering (Pat Connell)

Senate Fish and Game – Room 422, 3pm

SB84 – Extend the paddlefish roe donation program (Steve Hinebauch)

Senate Highways and Transportation – Room 405, 3pm

SB33 – Clarify that highway structures not subject to building code requirements (Brian Hoven)

SB35 – Revise laws concerning deposit and expenditure of highway revenue (Brian Hoven)

Senate Judiciary – Room 303, 10am

SR2 – Senate resolution regarding litigation involving the Senate confirmation process (Nels Swandal)

Senate Taxation – Room 405, 9am

SB10 – Repeal the refundable income tax credit relief multiple (Mark Blasdel)

SB27 – Amend TIF laws related to public hearings and reporting (Fred Thomas)

House Agriculture – Room 137, 3pm

HB82 – Update vertebrate pest management laws (Jacob Bachmeier)

HB130 – Revise commercial feed inspection fee and reporting requirements (Zac Perry)

HB131 – Revise reports and fees for produce, seed, feed, fertilizer (Zac Perry)

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

HB16 – Revise interim committee review authority over alcohol beverage laws (Vince Ricci)

HB25 – Revise reporting for business industrial development corporations (Ryan Lynch)

HB73 – Regulate certain air ambulance memberships as insurance (Ryan Lynch)

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

HB96 – Revise free elk license/permit for landowner providing free public elk hunting (Zach Brown)

HB128 – Revise waiting period for bighorn sheep licenses (Ray Shaw)

HB150 – Clarify FWP residency requirement for armed forces member, spouse & dependent (Kerry White)

House Judiciary – Room 137, 8am

HB89 – Establish holistic defense pilot project within state public defender system (Kimberly Dudik)

HB94 – Generally revise public safety officer standards/training council laws (Frank Garner)

HB135 – Revise Youth Court Act to allow information sharing (Kimberly Dudik)

House Legislative Administration – Room 455, 2pm

HB90 – Require interim committees and EQC to adopt rules to allow proxies (Bryce Bennett)

House State Administration – Room 455, 9am

HB40 – Allow Dissemination of Confidential Criminal Justice Info to Adjutant General (Kim Abbott)

HB117 – Provide an appropriation for grants to local veteran suicide prevention efforts (Jonathan Windy Boy)

HB118 – Revise and provide additional funding for state suicide prevention program (Jonathan Windy Boy)

House Taxation – Room 152, 8am

HB19 – Allow claim of elderly owner/renter credit on property not subject to taxes (Tom Jacobson)

HB29 – Require parcel to be a least 1 acre for valuation as agricultural property (Jeff Essmann)

HB42 – Revise partnership filing due dates to match federal tax filing due dates (Kim Abbott)

Wednesday – January 11 – Legislative Day 8

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

SB68 – Revise wholesale drug distribution license through Board of Pharmacy (Dick Barrett)

Senate Judiciary – Room 303, 8am

SB81 – Generally revise coroner laws (Nels Swandal)

SB90 – Remove mandatory jail for driving on suspended or revoked license (Nels Swandal)

Senate Natural Resources – Room 303, 3pm

SB15 – Revise collection of payment for historic rights of way (Jill Cohenour)

SB18 – Establish wildfire fuel reduction funding process (Pat Connell)

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

HB80 – General revise laws on secretary of state's business services (Willis Curdy)

HB106 – Provide registration authority for appraisal management companies (Tom Jacobson)

HB114 – Prohibit the sale or trade of cultural patrimony and sacred objects (George Kipp)

HB122 – Revise Board of Realty Regulation (Casey Schreiner)

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

HB189 – Eliminate certain automatic utility rate adjustments (Daniel Zolnikov)

HB193 – Revise utility electric cost recovery (Tom Woods)

House Human Services – Room 152, 3pm

HB95 – Increasing access to behavioral health care (Gordon Pierson)

HB121 – Remove sunset on patient-centered medical homes (Amanda Curtis)

House Judiciary – Room 137, 8am

HB129 – Revising laws related to privacy in communications (Ellie Hill Smith)

HB133 – Generally revise sentencing laws (Nate McConnell)

House Natural Resources – Room 172, 3pm

HB53 – Repeal assessment computation statute for conservation districts (Zach Brown)

HB54 – Revise water right abandonment laws to account for drought plans (Zach Brown)

HB78 – Revise temporary water right lease laws (Ryan Lynch)

House State Administration – Room 455, 9am

HB67 – Generally revise Teachers' Retirement System (Marilyn Ryan)

HB68 – Revise university system retirement plan participation requirements (Marilyn Ryan)

HB72 – Increase university system supplemental contribution to TRS (Ryan Lynch)

HB159 – Designate Shelby veterans' memorial (Rob Cook)

House Taxation – Room 152, 8am

HB43 – Authorize informal review deadline for second year property reappraisal cycle (Dave Fern)

HB47 – Revise tax laws to adopt federal regulations for partnerships (Zach Brown)

HB63 – Require withholding annual returns, W2s, and 1099s to be filed earlier (Jim Hamilton)

HB115 – Revise agricultural implements and machinery appraisal laws (George Kipp)

House Transportation – Room 455, 3pm

HB92 – Allow for alternative contracting process for the department of transportation (Frank Garner)

HB170 – Reducing vehicle fees for seniors (Jeremy Trebas)

HB174 – Revising vehicle requirements for the use of headlamps and tail lamps (Barry Usher)

Thursday – January 12 – Legislative Day 9

Senate Fish and Game – Room 422, 3pm

SB74 – Authorize FWP commission to require barbless hooks in catch-and-release waters (Pat Connell)

SB91 – Clarify what constitutes as shooting from a vehicle for hunting purposes (Jedediah Hinkle)

Senate Judiciary – Room 303, 8am

SB9 – Provide for primary enforcement of seatbelt laws (Dick Barrett)

House Agriculture – Room 137, 3pm

HB157 – Removing restrictions on possession of domestically-bred foxes (Forrest Mandeville)

HB158 – Revise commercial fertilizer assessment laws (Rob Cook)

SB73 – Revise laws related to livestock loss (Pat Connell)

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

HB120 – Revise insurance laws pertaining to NAIC accreditation (Jacob Bachmeier)

HB145 – Adopt NAIC model legislation regarding Annuities (Zach Brown)

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

HB97 – Increase block management landowner payment cap (Denley Loge)

HB164 – Revise distribution of base hunting license revenue (Kelly Flynn)

House Judiciary – Room 137, 8am

HB111 – Revising laws related to minor in possession data (Ryan Lynch)

HB143 – Generally revise criminal justice laws (Ryan Lynch)

HB165 – Revise punitive damage laws (Greg Hertz)

House Legislative Administration – Room 455, 2pm

HB100 – Revise legislative objection polling for administrative rulemaking process (Bryce Bennett)

House State Administration – Room 455, 9am

HB79 – Modify when a military member may be turned over to civil authorities for trial (Willis Curdy)

HB136 – Actuarial funding for the Gamer Wardens’ and Peach Officers’ Retirement System (Geraldine Custer)

HB155 – Eliminate election day as state holiday (Greg Hertz)

House Taxation – Room 152, 8am

HB18 – Revise tax lien and tax deed laws (Tom Jacobson)

HB30 – Remove voted levies approved after creation of TIF from tax increment provision (Jeff Essmann)

HB74 – Revise property reappraisal laws (Greg Hertz)

HB76 – Amend laws related to remittance of tax increment (Greg Hertz)

Friday – January 13 – Legislative Day 10 – Draft Deadlines – Floor Amendments – Add/Delete Sponsors

House Human Services – Room 152, 3pm

HB24 – Providing protections to vulnerable persons from financial exploitation (Ron Ehli)

HB139 – Revise adult protective services (Moffie Funk)

House Judiciary – Room 137, 8am

HB46 – Generally revising funding for civil legal aid (Kimberly Dudik)

HB64 – Revise child abuse diversion project laws (Kimberly Dudik)

HB168 – Provide for expungement of criminal records for misdemeanors (Zach Brown)

House Natural Resources – Room 172, 3pm

HB99 – Limit adverse effects analysis (Zach Brown)

HB104 – Statutory appropriation for Ground Water Investigation Program (Carl Glimm)

HB107 – Establish Surface Water Assessment and Monitoring Program (Carl Glimm)

House State Administration – Room 455, 9am

HB39 – Adopting the most recent federal laws applicable to the National Guard (Jacob Bachmeier)

House Taxation – Room 152, 8am

HB112 – Revise uniform dispute review procedures for collection of delinquent taxes (Dave Fern)