

2023 Montana Legislative Update – Week 3



January 20, 2023

Week 3, MGGA leadership juggled the legislature and MAGIE in Great Falls.

In Helena, a top priority in the Budget for Montana Families, Governor Gianforte’s proposal to reform the state’s business equipment tax to help small businesses, as well as family farms and ranches, came up for a hearing in House Tax Committee. Past President Koch and President Keane joined members that ranged from chambers, to retail, to bankers, to economic developers and other ag organizations in support of House Bill 212. This bill is sponsored by Rep. Josh Kassmier, R-Fort Benton and expands the business equipment tax exemption from \$300,000 to \$1 million.

Past President Koch testified on behalf of MGGA and a farmer from the Flathead. *“A new John Deere combine 10 years ago would run you around \$500,000. Today the X9 with a header is \$1.2 million for a combine.”* Tryg Koch shared in his testimony, *“This hopefully gives you some incentive by learning just how much the machinery has gone up in price.”*

MGGA thanks the work of the Governor and Representative Kassmier for their continued support to assist farmers. We thank the work of the Tax Committee and their work of passing the bill out of committee. It now heads to House Appropriations next week.





Upcoming:

[HB 2 - General Appropriations Act](#)

Sponsored by: Llew Jones

Many joint subcommittee hearings will take place throughout the week

[HB 5 - Long-range building appropriations](#)

Provides for a transfer of funds from the Capital Developments Long-Range Building Program account to the Major Repair Long-Range Building Program account and for a transfer of funds from the State General Fund to the Capital Developments Long-Range Building Program account

Sponsored by: Mike Hopkins

Friday, January 27

House Joint Appropriations on Long Range Planning

[HB 8 - Renewable resource bonds and loans](#)

Approves renewable resource projects and authorizes loans

Sponsored by: Mike Hopkins

Monday, January 23

House Joint Appropriations on Long Range Planning

[HB 113 - Repeal licensing of hucksters](#)

Sponsored by: Greg Kmetz

Monday, January 23

Senate Local Government

[HB 212 - Increase business equipment tax exemption](#)

Increases the class eight business equipment tax exemption

Sponsored by: Joshua Kassmier

Monday, January 23

House Appropriations

[HB 276 - Establish a farm to food bank grant program](#)

Sponsored by: Marty Malone

Tuesday, January 24

House Agriculture

[HB 290 - Revise laws related to membership of wetlands protection advisory council](#)

Revises appointments to the Wetlands Protection Advisory Council

Sponsored by: Bob Phalen

Tuesday, January 24

House Fish, Wildlife & Parks

[SB 54 - Revise centrally assessed property appraisals](#)

Revises the reappraisal cycle for certain centrally assessed property; provides for a 2-year reappraisal cycle for certain centrally assessed property

Sponsored by: Greg Hertz

Scheduled for 2nd reading on Monday, January 23

[SB 58 - Increase landowner payment cap for block management](#)

Increases the maximum annual block management program allowable payment to landowners

Sponsored by: Steve Hinebauch

Monday, January 23

Senate Finance & Claims

Waiting for Committee Executive Action:

[HB 129 - Revise fees for special mobile equipment](#)

Revises laws related to special mobile equipment exemptions and identification decals

Sponsored by: Tom Welch

Tuesday, January 10

[SB 47 - Revise commercial driver's license laws to comply with federal requirements](#)

Revises commercial driver's license law to comply with federal requirements; requires the Department of Justice to query the entry level driver training provider registry and the commercial drug and alcohol clearinghouse under certain conditions

Sponsored by: Theresa Manzella

Wednesday, January 11

Senate Judiciary

[SB 126 - Provide funding for Montana State Fund](#)

Sponsored by: Greg Hertz

Thursday, January 12

Senate Finance & Claims

[SB 132 - Revise agricultural education laws](#)

Enhances agricultural education in Montana; revises the requirements and payments under the Advancing Agricultural Education in Montana Program

Sponsored by: Becky Beard

Wednesday, January 11

Senate Education & Cultural Resources

Referred to Committee:

[HB 26 - Generally revise highway use laws](#)

Revises highway use laws; revises hay hauling requirements; eliminates imprisonment as a potential penalty for violating certain weight and speed restrictions

Sponsored by: George Nikolakakos

Monday, January 16

[SB 28 - Provide funding for conservation districts](#)

Transfers tax revenue from marijuana sales to the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation for grants to conservation districts

Sponsored by: Mike Lang

Friday, January 13

Draft Taken off Hold, or to Requester for Review, or Ready for Delivery:

[LC0178 - Generally revise agriculture laws](#)

Sponsored by: Mike Lang

Wednesday, January 11

[LC2347 - Generally revise right to repair laws](#)

Sponsored by: Willis Curdy

Friday, January 13

[LC2480 - Generally revise the MT wheat & barley checkoff program](#)

Sponsored by: Ross Fitzgerald

Monday, January 16

Bill Drafts of Great Interest:

[LC2048 - Constitutional amendment to enshrine right to farm and ranch](#)

Sponsored by: Caleb Hinkle

[LC3057 - Increase funding for Montana agricultural experiment stations](#)

Sponsored by: Russel Miner

[LC4060 - Generally revise MAES & MSU budgets](#)

Sponsored by: Ross Fitzgerald

For more information:

- [Primary Preference List](#)
- [MGGG State Legislature Home Page](#)
- [House Ag Committee Hearing](#)
- [Senate Ag Committee Hearing](#)



How To Have Your Say Virtually! There are new ways to participate with new remote capabilities!

[Request To Testify Remotely/Upload Your Testimony](#)

- You will be able to select from the bills that are currently scheduled for hearing for the next 3 days.
- By 5PM the day before the hearing, you will be able to submit your written testimony, write a brief message, or request a Zoom link to testify in the bill hearing.
- Fill out the form with the pertinent details and submit. You will receive an email confirmation.
- You do not have to testify in order to submit written comments. Written comments received by the deadline will be distributed to all committee members. However, if you request a Zoom link, we request that you write a brief message in the event of technical difficulties so that your name will be entered into the record.
- If you wish to submit written testimony after the 5PM deadline please call the Information Desk at (406) 444-4800 for assistance
- Rules of decorum must be followed, and the Presiding Officer will call on you when it is your turn to speak. Follow the Zoom directions and raise your hand to let the Remote Committee Coordinator know when you want to speak. We will not assume that because you requested the Zoom link that you automatically want to testify. There may be limits placed on how many people are allowed to testify remotely on each bill.

Traditional ways of accessing the Legislature are still available

Website Messages

- [Send messages through the website](#): you can send a web message to a single legislator or to a committee at any time using a web form.

Phone Messages

- Call (406) 444-4800 and your message will be delivered to a legislator.

Attend committee hearings

- The public will be allowed to attend hearings at the capitol, but because of social distancing, you may only be allowed in the room when it is your time to testify and may not be able to stay in the room. We ask that you wear a mask or face covering in the Capitol Building and in hearing rooms.

Watch/Listen

- [Watch or listen to committee hearings](#): All committee meetings will have a video-stream link and an audio-stream link so you can observe a committee meeting live or watch the archive of the hearing.

Contact us:

- [Your district director](#)
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