



2023 Montana Legislative Update – Week 5



February 3, 2023

This week brings us the end of January and the beginning of February. The Capitol has seen many testimonies, gatherings in the rotunda and votes in committees and both chambers.

It was a slower week for MGGA in Helena, which worked out well due to the fact all the officers traveled to Washington, D.C. for the Wheat Industry Winter Conference with National Association of Wheat Growers and U.S. Wheat Associates.

Mid-week, Christy Clark's nomination for Director of Department of Agriculture passed the Senate floor, confirming her nomination. As you may recall last week, President Keane testified in support and we are happy to see the confirmation be completed on the Senate floor.



President Keane testifying in support of Christy Clark's nomination

This Week:

[HB 1 - Feed bill to fund 68th legislative session and prepare for 2025](#)

Appropriates money for the operation of the current and subsequent legislature

Sponsored by: Llew Jones

Signed by the Governor Monday, January 30

[HB 2 - General Appropriations Act](#)

Sponsored by: Llew Jones

Many joint subcommittee hearings will take place throughout the week

[HB 93 - Eliminate noxious weed seed free forage advisory council](#)

Revises laws related to noxious weed management; eliminates the noxious weed advisory council and transfers duties to the noxious weed management advisory council

Sponsored by: Paul Green

Tuesday, January 31

Senate Agriculture, Livestock & Irrigation

[HB 94 - Repeal Montana huckleberry products law](#)

Repeals the Montana huckleberry filing laws

Sponsored by: Paul Green

Tuesday, January 31

Senate Agriculture, Livestock & Irrigation

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

Sponsored by: Greg Kmetz

Scheduled for 2nd Reading on Friday, February 3

[HB 198 - Provide for municipal authority regarding encroachments](#)

Provides for municipal authority to enact certain ordinances regarding highway encroachments; defines "impermanent encroachment"

Sponsored by: Julie Dooling

Monday, January 30

[HB 201 - Revise minimum wage laws](#)

Provides for an increase in the minimum wage; limits cost-of-living increases until the minimum wage reaches \$11.39 an hour

Sponsored by: Kelly Kortum

Thursday, February 2

House Business & Labor

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

Revises appointments to the Wetlands Protection Advisory Council

Sponsored by: Gary Parry

Transmitted to Senate on Thursday, February 2

[HB 350 - Generally revise country of origin labeling](#)

Adopts the Country of Origin Placarding Act of 2023

Sponsored by: Frank Smith

Thursday, February 2

House Agriculture

[HB 388 - Increase penalty for uninspected livestock](#)

Sponsored by: Joshua Kassmier

Introduced on Thursday, February 2

[HB 406 - Clarify regulations for ponds](#)

Clarifies that certain ponds may not adversely affect prior appropriators

Sponsored by: Fred Anderson

Introduced on Friday, February 3

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

Increases the maximum annual block management program allowable payment to landowners

Sponsored by: Steve Hinebauch

Transmitted to House on Tuesday, January 31

[SB 105 - Prohibit rent control of private property](#)

Sponsored by: Steve Fitzpatrick

Transmitted to House on Tuesday, January 31

[SB 121 - Reduce top marginal income tax rate and increase EITC](#)

Revises individual income tax laws; reduces the top marginal individual income tax rate; increases the earned income tax credit

Sponsored by: Becky Beard

Thursday, February 2

Senate Finance & Claims

[SB 125 - Limit certain property tax levies to 5 years without reapproval](#)

Limits the duration of certain mill levies submitted to voters; limits mill levies to 5 years without voter approval

Sponsored by: Greg Hertz

Tuesday, January 31

Senate Taxation

[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

Bill passed as amended on Wednesday, February 1

Senate Finance & Claims

[SB 202 - Generally revise the Montana Local Food Choice Act](#)

Clarifies exemptions for producers of homemade food or homemade food products

Sponsored by: Greg Hertz

Monday, January 30

Senate Public Health, Welfare & Safety

Waiting for Committee Executive Action:

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

Sponsored by: Greg Hertz

Thursday, January 12

Senate Finance & Claims

Referred to Committee:

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

Revises laws related to special mobile equipment exemptions and identification decals

Sponsored by: Tom Welch

Wednesday, January 25

[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:

[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](#)
- [MGGA 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 anytime 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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