



Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee

65th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

MARY MCNALLY--Chair
TOM RICHMOND
SCOTT SALES
CYNTHIA WOLKEN

HOUSE MEMBERS

DEREK SKEES--Vice Chair
LAURIE BISHOP
ZAC PERRY
DANIEL ZOLNIKOV

COMMITTEE STAFF

TREVOR GRAFF, Lead Staff
JAMESON WALKER, Staff Attorney
NADINE SPENCER, Secretary

MINUTES LOG

October 26, 2017
Room 172, Capitol Building
Helena, Montana

Please note: This document is a Minutes Log and provides a notation of the time elapsed between the beginning of the meeting and the time at which the item was presented or discussed, a motion was made, or a vote was taken. The narrative presented here is provided only as a guide to the audio or video record of the meeting. The official discussion, motion, or vote is available on the audio or video archive of this meeting. The Legislature does not prepare a transcript of meeting activities. The time designation may be used to locate the referenced discussion on the audio or video recording of this meeting.

Access to an electronic copy of these minutes and the audio or video recording is provided from the Legislative Branch home page at <http://leg.mt.gov>. On the left-side menu of the home page, select Committees, then Interim. Once on the page for Interim Committees, scroll down to the appropriate committee. The written Minutes Log, along with the audio and video recordings, is listed by meeting date on the interim committee's web page. Each of the Exhibits is linked and can be viewed by clicking on the Exhibit of interest. All Exhibits are public information and may be printed.

Please contact the Legislative Services Division at 406-444-3064 for more information.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELEPHONE CONFERENCE

REP. DEREK SKEES, Vice Chair

SEN. SCOTT SALES
SEN. CYNTHIA WOLKEN

REP. LAURIE BISHOP
REP. ZAC PERRY
REP. DANIEL ZOLNIKOV

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED

SEN. MARY MCNALLY, Chair
SEN. TOM RICHMOND

STAFF PRESENT IN HELENA

TREVOR GRAFF, Lead Staff
JAMESON WALKER, Staff Attorney
SONJA NOWAKOWSKI, Director
NADINE SPENCER, Secretary

VISITORS' LIST (Attachment 1)

AGENDA (Attachment 2)

COMMITTEE ACTIONS

The Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee (ETIC):

- Voted to send a letter, as amended by Rep. Zolnikov, to Montana's congressional delegation regarding solar tariff issues.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

00:00:01 Rep. Skees called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. The secretary called the roll. [\(Attachment 3\)](#) Sen. Richmond was excused and left his proxy with Rep. Skees. Sen. McNally was excused and left her proxy with Sen. Wolken. [\(Attachment 4\)](#)

LETTER TO MONTANA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION RE: SOLAR TARIFF ISSUES

00:01:01 Rep. Skees said committee members received a copy of a draft letter written to Montana's congressional delegation regarding solar tariff issues [\(Exhibit 1\)](#) and a copy of the letter with an amendment added by Rep. Zolnikov. [\(Exhibit 2\)](#)

00:01:36 Trevor Graff, research analyst, Legislative Services Division (LSD), provided information on the letter and the timeline.

00:01:49 Sen. Wolken joined the meeting.

00:03:46 Mr. Graff discussed the draft letter and the amendment by Rep. Zolnikov.

Public comment

00:04:30 Andrew Valainis, executive director, Montana Renewable Energy Association, spoke in support of sending the letter.

Committee questions and discussion

00:06:35 Rep. Skees asked Rep. Zolnikov about his amendment.

00:07:49 Rep. Skees read the amendment.

00:08:23 Sen. Sales commented on free-trade and said he did not support the letter or the amendment.

00:09:52 Rep. Skees asked Sen. Sales if he thought there was any additional action in the letter other than the request that any remedy not harm the solar industry.

00:11:09 Rep. Zolnikov said the benefit to producers of the tariffs is to the detriment of consumers.

00:12:31 Rep. Skees commented on the impetus of the letter.

00:13:05 Rep. Skees asked Mr. Graff if he had any additional comments on what the trade

commission is trying to accomplish. Mr. Graff said there will be two more public hearings on the issue.

00:13:43 Rep. Skees asked the committee if it wanted to take any action.

Motion

00:14:08 Rep. Bishop moved to send the letter, as amended by Rep. Zolnikov, to Montana's congressional delegation.

Discussion on the Motion

00:14:32 Rep. Skees

Vote

00:15:58 The motion carried 6-2 by roll call vote with Sen. Richmond and Sen. Sales voting no. **(Attachment 5)** Sen. Richmond and Sen. McNally voted by proxy.

00:16:39 Rep. Skees instructed staff to send the letters on behalf of the ETIC.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ANY MATTER NOT CONTAINED IN THIS AGENDA AND THAT IS WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE ETIC

None

OTHER BUSINESS

00:18:01 Sonja Nowakowski, director, Office of Research and Policy Analysis, LSD, said the ETIC received a public comment concerning small water user issues and that it will be posted to the website and emailed to committee members.
(Exhibit 3)

ADJOURN

00:18:44 Rep. Skees adjourned the meeting at 10:22 a.m.

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