



Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee

60th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

JERRY BLACK
VERDELL JACKSON
GREG LIND
DON RYAN

HOUSE MEMBERS

DUANE ANKNEY
ROBYN DRISCOLL
HARRY KLOCK
BRADY WISEMAN

COMMITTEE STAFF

SONJA NOWAKOWSKI, Lead Staff
TODD EVERTS, Staff Attorney
DAWN FIELD, Secretary

Contact: Sonja Nowakowski
Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee Staff
444-3078

Interim planning, PSC presentation on ETIC agenda

HELENA -- A legislative committee will chart its course for the next 16 months, deciding whether to tackle topics ranging from carbon sequestration to public power.

The Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee meets July 10 in Helena. On the agenda is a discussion of the committee's work plan and a presentation by Public Service Commission Chairman Greg Jergeson. Tentatively, the committee also will receive an update on the new Energy Infrastructure Promotion and Development program taking shape in the Department of Commerce.

The ETIC also will elect a chairman or woman and a vice chair.

While the Legislative Council did not formally assign the ETIC any specific studies in the form of bills or resolutions, members have forwarded several topics for the committee to consider.

A study of carbon sequestration is on the table for committee consideration. CO₂ was the topic of at least eight bills and two proposed study resolutions considered during the 2007 legislative session. Most of those bills died in process. House Bill 25, the "Electric Utility Industry Generation Reintegration Act" includes a carbon aspect. It was approved and signed by Gov. Brian Schweitzer. House Bill 3, approved during the 2007 Special Session, provides tax incentives for carbon sequestration efforts.

An evaluation of public power in Montana was forwarded to the committee for consideration. ETIC members also suggested an evaluation of Montana's energy transmission systems. The costs and savings of further developing wind resources is another topic the ETIC could review.

During the July meeting, the committee member who suggested the topic will have an opportunity to elaborate. The committee then will work through each idea and decide whether to approve any or all of the potential study items.

Commissioner Jergeson will discuss PSC issues pertinent to the committee and is expected to review the rulemaking the commission will pursue in the coming months. With the adoption of HB 25, the PSC will propose rules in three different areas. They expect to simultaneously take

on the resource planning and procurement rules and the filing requirements pursuant to the preapproval process. The carbon management rules then will be handled.

The ETIC meeting starts at 8:30 a.m. in Room 102 of the Capitol. A complete agenda can be found at: http://leg.mt.gov/css/committees/interim/2007_2008/energy_telecom/default.asp