

## AN OVERVIEW OF HOW INTERIM STUDIES ARE SELECTED AND ASSIGNED

Legislators often ask how the several phases of the interim study selection process fit together. This brief explanation is designed to answer most of these questions. If any of your questions remain unanswered, please contact Dave Bohyer or Susan Fox at the Legislative Services Division (444-3064).

The selection process for interim studies is established by legislative rules and by law. Legislative rules provide that studies are requested by joint resolution, but studies are sometimes requested by bill, as well. The law and Legislative Council policy then establish the following:

1. The Legislative Services Division is to distribute to each legislator a list of study resolutions adopted. You are asked to prioritize each study request in order of importance, with "1" being the most important, "2" being the next most important, "3" being the next most important, and so on. Please be sure to indicate a priority for each study you believe should have any priority. You do not have to rank all of the studies.
2. Legislators return their completed ballots by a specified date, staff compiles the results into a legislatively-prioritized list, and the Legislative Council meets to consider the study rankings. Because the staff will have compiled the results of the priority poll prior to the Council meeting, the Council members will have been apprised of the composite priority assigned by the whole Legislature to each study request.
3. The Council considers the priorities and the staff and funding resources, as estimated by the LSD staff, that would be required to conduct each study. The Council and staff must keep in mind studies assigned by bill. A study assigned by bill takes priority over a study requested by resolution. After the Council considers its options, the Council members select the studies to be conducted. The Council is likely to schedule this action for late May.  
**NOTE: Due to the number of interim studies requested -- 17 -- it is likely that not all of the studies in this poll will be assigned by the Legislative Council.**
4. After the Council has reviewed the poll results and selected the issues to be studied, it will determine to which interim committee each study selected is to be assigned. Notification will be provided in *The Interim* newsletter and on line at the Legislative Website -- <http://leg.mt.gov/css/default.asp> -- as well as by each interim committee's lead staffer.
5. The interim committees will be appointed prior to adjournment *sine die* of the 61st Legislature. The memberships of the interim committees are selected within each house from the respective standing committees that are most conversant with the subjects assigned to the interim committees. Each interim committee is composed of at least four members of each house, with equal representation by party affiliation.
6. The lead Legislative Branch staffer will contact the senior senator of each respective interim committee for the purpose of calling an organizational meeting. The presiding officer and vice presiding officer, who must be of different political parties, are elected by the members of the interim committee at the organizational meeting.
7. Based on a proposed study plan and work schedule developed by the staff, each committee decides its own course of action for the interim. Legislative Council rules and the study resolutions require that **all** interim study work be completed prior to September 15, 2010.

## Interim Study Poll Roster 2009-10 Interim

Joint Resolution	Short Title/Subject of Resolution
HJR 1	Interim study of biomass
HJR 15	Study funding for a recreation and tourism enhancement program
HJR 30	Study fire suppression issues
HJR 32	Study impact of historic preservation and strategies for preservation
HJR 35	Interim study of state employee bonus payments
HJR 36	Interim study of family self-sufficiency and economic development
HJR 39	Study development of additional community services for dev. disabled
SJR 2	Study community college establishment process
SJR 3	Interim study to consider establishment of Montana Scholarship Program
SJR 14	Study cooperative arrangements between state agriculture labs
SJR 16	Study cost of auto insurance and compliance with mandatory requirements
SJR 28	Resolution requesting an interim study on recycling and solid waste recovery
SJR 29	Study retention of DNA evidence by state and local law enforcement agencies
SJR 30	Study work comp rates
SJR 35	Study health care
SJR 37	Study of filing income tax returns by married taxpayers
SJR 39	Study DUI laws and enforcement