



## ENGAGING WITH LEGISLATORS

### *During the Interim*

The Montana Legislative Session happens every two years for 90 days. Along with passing bills, legislators also identify issues they want to study more in-depth during the interim, the time between sessions. The interim committees are made up of members from both the House and Senate. Legislative leadership decides who will serve on each committee. The committees often invite experts to present information relevant to their work. Members of the public also get a chance to provide public comment. Legislators often use what they learn during the interim to make well-informed decisions about what bills to consider during the next session.

The interim is a good time to connect one-on-one with your local legislators. As a reminder, Montana has a citizen legislature which means members are ordinary citizens — like you — who are elected to serve the public part-time in addition to their regular jobs.

### WAYS TO ENGAGE:

#### **Interim Committee(s):**

- Provide public comment (in-person or virtually)
- Written public comment through email or the legislature’s messaging feature at any time
- Send a email to the committee staffer to provide to the whole committee

#### **Meeting with Legislators:**

- Schedule a time to meet for coffee
- Provide information and resources
- Coordinate a site visit (e.g., child care program)

#### *Helpful Tip*

*Montana’s Legislators are elected by residents living in each district. House seats are elected every two years and Senate seats are elected every four years. It is a good idea to engage individuals running for a seat even before they are officially elected!*





## STEPS TO MEET WITH CURRENT OR POTENTIAL LEGISLATOR:

1. Contact the legislator by email or phone to request a meeting.
2. Mention you are a constituent and where you live (town/city).
3. Refer to the topic of interest you wish to discuss.
4. Suggest specific dates and times for the meeting.
5. Confirm the time and place of the meeting one day before the scheduled date.
6. Prepare any talking points for yourself.
7. Gather resource materials (if applicable).
8. Practice or role-play ahead of time to feel more comfortable if you aren't experienced in meeting with policymakers.

## EXAMPLE INTERIM COMMITTEE LETTER:

*Dear Members of the Economic Affairs Interim Committee,*

*My name is (your first and last name) and I am a (parent/service provider/community member) living in (location). I have recently discovered this committee has prioritized (topic) as an issue to learn more about during the interim. I am so pleased with your decision and want to say thank you.*

*(insert your personal or professional perspective/experience/story on the issue)*

*Again, thank you for prioritizing young children and families in our state. Please reach out if you have any questions or if I can help provide and resources that may be helpful.*

*Sincerely,*

*(your contact information)*



**Interim Committee Information**  
<https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/>

