

As of March 15, 2005

Bill Type - Number	Primary Sponsor	Status	Short Title	Comment
HB 2	John E Witt	Taken out of committee, placed on second reading in the House; will likely be discussed Thursday, Friday and Saturday	General appropriations act	See attached MUS 2007 Biennium Budget Narrative
HB 5	Jack Wells	Heard in Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long Range Planning;	Long-range building appropriations	See attached HB 5 descriptive handout
HB 540	Sue Dickenson	Heard in Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long Range Planning; will likely be heard in House Appropriations committee on Monday	Bonding for higher education and other state projects	See attached HB 540 descriptive handout
HB 447 Page 1	Dave Gallik	Passed both houses; signed by Governor Schweitzer	Increase state employee pay	This bill, the state employee pay plan, has already passed both houses of the legislature and been signed into law by the Governor. The bill increases state employee pay by 3.5% or \$1,005, whichever is greater, in FY 2006, and by 4.0% or \$1,188 in FY 2007. 38% of the cost to the campuses and 43% of the overall cost to the MUS is funded in HB 13. OCHE position: proponent

<b>HB 16</b> Page 12	Rick Ripley	Passed House Education and Appropriations Committees; passed on the House floor 91-3 and was transmitted to the Senate; has been heard in the Senate Education and Cultural Resources Committee and is awaiting executive action	Funding for certain nonbeneficiary students	Increases the maximum financial assistance to resident nonbeneficiary students attending tribal community colleges from \$1,500 to approximately \$3,024. The bill limits assistance to those students enrolled in courses for which credit is transferable to another Montana college or university, except for courses directly related to a vocational degree program or to a 2- to 4-year degree program or certificate program. 375 qualifying nonbeneficiary students were reported to the OCHE in FY 2004. If the Board of Regents are fully appropriated a line item in the general appropriations act, the total cost would be \$1,134,000 of general fund per year. Governor Schweitzer's budget allowed for \$900,000 in biennial appropriation. The financial assistance to tribal colleges will be distributed on a prorated basis if the appropriation is less than the maximum amount per year. OCHE position: proponent
<b>HB 151</b> Page 16	Kathleen Galvin-Halcro	Passed as amended in House Education Committee; rereferred to House Appropriations Committee, where the bill has been heard and is awaiting executive action	Waive some university tuition for K-12 teachers' continuing education credits	Allows the Board of Regents to waive some tuition for full-time Montana teachers who have been teaching 10 years or less after being certified, to apply toward continuing education necessary for certification renewal. Teachers can have up to three credits waived in one five-year period. Board of Regents policy states that no fee waivers will be granted for any course or program which is supported solely by fees generated, which is the case with Continuing Education programs. Therefore, this fee waiver would apply only to regular state supported courses. The total cost to the Montana University System in the first year is estimated at \$95,300. This amount would double in the second year as educator licenses expire. The sponsor has requested that general funding be added to fund this bill. OCHE position: informational/monitoring
<b>HB 369</b> Page 21	Dave Gallik	Passed as amended in House Education Committee; rereferred to House Appropriations Committee, where the bill has been heard and is awaiting executive action	Fund cost of taking college admission examination	Pays for students to take a national, curriculum-based college entrance exam during their junior year of high school. It is not mandatory that students take the exam. This program has an approximate general fund cost of \$600,000 for the biennium beginning July 1, 2005 to be appropriated to the Superintendent of Public Instruction to reimburse school districts. Similar programs in other states have, over time, increased college going rates and college retention rates. OCHE position: proponent

HB 435 Page 22	Gary Branae	Passed as amended in House Education Committee; rereferred to House Appropriations Committee, where the bill has been heard and is awaiting executive action	Establish Governor's Postsecondary Scholarship Program	The Governor's Postsecondary Scholarship Program would award a total of 480 merit based scholarships and 500 need based scholarships per year. Merit based aid would include 185 scholarships to 4-year schools (one for every high school in Montana) valued at \$1,000, and 185 merit based \$1,000 scholarships for 2-year schools. It would also award 40 at large merit based scholarships valued at \$2,000 to be used at 4-year schools, and 40 at large merit based scholarships worth \$1,000 to be used at 2-year schools. The 500 need based scholarships would be awarded to be used only at 2-year schools, and the program would award 180 \$1,000 scholarships to students including nontraditional students; 100 \$1,000 scholarships for students in the health sciences area; and 220 \$1,000 for students studying in the technology area. The Board of Regents, through the OCHE, will administer the program with assistance from a three-member council. Amendments are being proposed to HB 2 to fund administration costs. OCHE position: proponent
HB 521 Page 34	Kevin T Furey	Passed House Business and Labor Committee; rereferred to House Appropriations Committee, where it has been heard and is awaiting executive action	Establish bid preference for food produced in Montana	Establishes a state contract preference for food produced in Montana. State agencies should, whenever possible, use food produced in Montana in food service programs. Contracts should be awarded to the lowest bidder or whose bid includes food that is produced in Montana and is of comparable quality, provided that the bid or proposal is not more than 10% higher than a bidder whose proposal does not include food produced in Montana. UM-Missoula and MSU-Bozeman would be most impacted. Amendments are being proposed to limit preferences to "single-type" food purchases and to exempt any food products or services purchased through an RFP. These amendments significantly mitigate the financial impact on the MUS. OCHE position: support as amended
HB 584 Page 41	Christopher Harris	Bill has been heard in House Taxation Committee and is awaiting executive action	Promote growth of film and other media in Montana	Will offer tax incentives for the motion picture and television industries for filming and developing print advertising in Montana. Purpose is to enhance Montana's economy by revitalizing and expanding the motion picture and television industries and related media in Montana and to promote the growth of small business. This will encourage the creation of jobs and help promote the tourism industry, among other things. According to the Department of Revenue, property taxes for the University System would be increased by approximately \$0.01 million. OCHE position: monitoring

HB 747 Page 52	Robyn Driscoll	Passed House Education Committee; passed on House floor (95-2) and has been transmitted to the Senate; waiting to be heard in the Senate Judiciary Committee	Limit liability for student construction projects	Except in cases of gross negligence or willful misconduct, school districts or public post-secondary institutions would not be liable for civil damages resulting from a construction project constructed as part of a public education program so long as prior disclosure of student construction is made. A two-thirds vote is required in each house of the legislature because it limits governmental liability. OCHE position: proponent
SB 72 Page 54	Jeff Mangan	Passed Senate State Administration Committee and Business, Labor and Economic Affairs Committee; rereferred to Senate Finance and Claims Committee where is has been heard and is awaiting executive action	Continuation of health insurance as a retirement incentive	State employees eligible for retirement between July 1, 2005, and October 1, 2005, may remain on the employer's group health insurance plan for a time period equal to 1 year for every 5 full years of the employee's service, not to exceed 4 years of employer contributions or terminating when the employee becomes eligible for Medicare. Employees who are members of the Teachers' Retirement System of the University System Optional Retirement Program are not entitled to this incentive. This would exempt University System faculty and professional staff, but classified staff would still be eligible. OCHE position: monitoring
SB 171 Page 62	Steven Gallus	Passed Senate Education and Cultural Resources Committee; passed Senate floor (31-19) and transmitted to House; passed House Education Committee; passed House floor (92-7); returned to Senate	Authority to hire coaches for longer duration	Authorizes Presidents of the units of the Montana University System to offer multiyear contracts to athletic coaches, subject to the supervision of the Regents. OCHE position: monitoring

As of March 15, 2005

<p><b>SB 219</b> Page 63</p>	<p>John Brueggeman</p>	<p>Heard and amended in Senate Taxation Committee; awaiting executive action</p>	<p>Income tax credit related to repayment of certain student loans</p>	<p>Income tax credits would be offered to taxpayers with student loan debt who attain an associate, baccalaureate, master's, or law degree from a Montana institution of higher education. Beginning the first year after the taxpayer attains the degree, the credits may be used for the number of years the individual attended a Montana institution of higher learning (2 years for an associate degree, 4 for a baccalaureate degree, 2 for a master's degree and 3 for a law degree, not to exceed 7 years total) or until the student loans are repaid, whichever comes first. The credit is equal to the amount of the loan repaid in the tax year but not to exceed \$500. It is estimated that 3,502 MUS graduates with loan debt would remain in-state after graduation each year. At \$500 per person, a \$1,751,000 cost to the general fund is estimated in FY 2007, and could reach up to \$5.9 million in FY 2010 as new graduates are allowed to claim the credit. OCHE position: monitoring</p>
<p><b>SB 273</b> Page 70</p>	<p>Corey Stapleton</p>	<p>Passed Senate Public Health, Welfare and Safety Committee; rereferred to Senate Finance and Claims Committee where the bill was tabled</p>	<p>Establish MSU-Billings school of rural medicine</p>	<p>Would establish a school of rural medicine on the campus of MSU-Billings and create a 13-member advisory planning council, administratively attached to the OCHE, to plan for creation of the school of rural medicine. As amended, \$50,000 would need to be appropriated to support the advisory council's study or the act is void. OCHE position: proponent</p>
<p><b>SB 432</b></p>	<p>John Brueggeman</p>	<p>Passed Senate Taxation Committee; passed Senate floor 49-0 and transmitted to House; referred to House Taxation Committee, awaiting hearing</p>	<p>Revise family education savings program</p>	<p>Enabling legislation for Family Education Savings Plan to meet current SECC requirements.</p>

As of March 15, 2005

SB 445 Page 75	Dan McGee	Passed Senate Education and Cultural Resources Committee; rereferred to Senate Finance and Claims Committee where it has been heard and is awaiting executive action	Authorize tuition waiver for qualified national guard members	Authorizes the Board of Regents to waive tuition for up to 5,000 credits each academic year for qualified members of the Montana National Guard. The sponsor believes the Department of Military Affairs could work with the Board of Regents to establish a definition of a qualified member, maintaining flexibility as the recruitment and retention needs of the Montana National Guard changes. If money is appropriated, the overall general fund cost would be approximately \$1.26 million for the biennium. Without appropriation, the MUS is put in the position of either denying National Guard fee waivers, or of finding other means to fund the waivers, which would presumably occur through tuition increases. This cost would be approximately \$45 per student during the biennium. OCHE position: opponent
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