



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF  
BUDGET AND PROGRAM PLANNING

## Fiscal Note 2025 Biennium

<b>Bill information:</b>	
HB0328 - Require certain govt boards to record public meetings in audio and video format (Barker, Brad )	
<b>Status:</b>	As Introduced

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Significant Local Gov Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs to be included in HB 2 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Technical Concerns   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Included in the Executive Budget        | <input type="checkbox"/> Significant Long-Term Impacts           | <input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated Revenue Form Attached |

### FISCAL SUMMARY

	<u>FY 2024</u> <u>Difference</u>	<u>FY 2025</u> <u>Difference</u>	<u>FY 2026</u> <u>Difference</u>	<u>FY 2027</u> <u>Difference</u>
<b>Expenditures:</b>				
General Fund	\$293,113	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Revenue:</b>				
General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Net Impact-General Fund Balance:</b>	(\$293,113)	\$0	\$0	\$0

**Description of fiscal impact:** HB 328 requires certain governmental entities to record public meetings in audio and video format. To implement the requirements in this bill, funds are appropriated to the Department of Administration to provide grants to these governmental entities to purchase audio and video recording equipment, train staff, and update processes to comply with the requirements of 2-3-214, MCA.

### FISCAL ANALYSIS

**Assumptions:**

**Department of Administration**

1. The Department of Administration will establish, and administer, a grant program which will require a .25 FTE in FY 2024. Salary and benefits for a .25 FTE are estimated at \$21,613.
2. The proposed legislation includes a \$271,500 appropriation to the department to provide \$500 grants to the governmental agencies for the purposes of purchasing audio and video recording equipment, training staff, and updating processes. There is potential for more than 500 grants to be issued to local government entities as part of this proposed legislation.

**Office of Public Instruction**

3. There is no direct state impact on the Office of Public Instruction associated with the provisions of HB 328 since these requirements relate to school district board meetings.

	<u>FY 2024 Difference</u>	<u>FY 2025 Difference</u>	<u>FY 2026 Difference</u>	<u>FY 2027 Difference</u>
<b><u>Fiscal Impact:</u></b>				
FTE	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b><u>Expenditures:</u></b>				
Personal Services	\$21,613	\$0	\$0	\$0
Grants	\$271,500	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL Expenditures</b>	<u>\$293,113</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
<b><u>Funding of Expenditures:</u></b>				
General Fund (01)	\$293,113	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL Funding of Exp.</b>	<u>\$293,113</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
<b><u>Revenues:</u></b>				
General Fund (01)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL Revenues</b>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
<b><u>Net Impact to Fund Balance (Revenue minus Funding of Expenditures):</u></b>				
General Fund (01)	(\$293,113)	\$0	\$0	\$0

**Effect on County or Other Local Revenues or Expenditures:**

**Montana Association of Counties**

1. Based on survey results, audio and video equipment estimates vary from \$2,500 to \$10,000.
2. Of the counties that either didn't respond to the survey or responded that they did not have audio or video capability, it is estimated that the costs to fund both components for all counties is \$400,000 in equipment costs.
3. Very few counties have the capability to record, in audio or video, their Boards of Health. It is assumed there will be the ability to use existing spaces and equipment, but it is difficult to project costs for just these recordings.
4. Five counties do not have websites to host this information. The cost to create these websites is unknown.

**Montana League of Cities and Towns**

5. It is estimated that at least 75% of Montana cities and towns do not currently have the equipment to record governing body meetings.
6. Costs to purchase the audio/video equipment is approximately \$40,000 to \$50,000 for each of the cities or towns that currently do not have this capability.
7. An additional \$20,000 to \$40,000 for closed captioning, and \$400 per meeting for technical support, is also needed for each of the cities and towns that currently do not have this capability.
8. The costs of storing the recordings are unknown, but it is estimated that this amount will also be substantial.

**Technical Notes:**

**Montana Association of Counties**

1. Ongoing maintenance and storage capabilities of the equipment required by this legislation are not addressed.
2. There is no clear understanding of whether the audio and video recordings will become part of, or supplant, the official public record (written minutes) that have a perpetual retention requirement.

**NOT SIGNED BY SPONSOR**

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*Sponsor's Initials*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*Budget Director's Initials*

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*