

## MACD Legislative and Advocacy Committee Charter - Duties and Responsibilities

Approved by MACD Board on 5/8/2023

### Purpose.

This Charter implements the Bylaws of Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) with regard to the Legislative and Advocacy Committee.

**Limitations.** No committee of the board has the authority to:

1. Approve dissolution, merger, sale, pledge, or transfer of MACD's assets.
2. Elect or remove directors or permanently fill board vacancies.
3. Amend or repeal bylaws or articles of incorporation.
4. Hire or fire executive director.
5. Approve or change the budget.

**Chair.** The Chair of this Committee shall be the Executive Director or a hired lobbyist, with no voting authority, and approved by the Board.

**Membership.** Legislative and Advocacy Committee members entitled to vote on recommendations shall be supervisors from district's in good standing, and approved by the MACD Board.

Committee advisors, without a vote, may include the board, staff, CD employees, and partners.

### Meetings and Procedure.

1. **Governance Calendar.** The Committee shall establish and continuously update key dates and timeline on the MACD Board Governance.
2. **Scheduling meetings during Legislative Sessions.** During the legislative session, this Committee will focus on session activity and typically meet on a weekly basis.
3. **Scheduling meetings outside of Legislative Session.** Outside of the legislative session, the Committee shall hold meetings at the call of the Executive Director or any two members of the committee.
4. **Minutes.** The Committee shall maintain minutes of its meetings and provide them to the full Board at regularly scheduled meetings or per MACD policies.
5. **Reporting to the Board.** Any action taken by the Legislative and Advocacy Committee between meetings of the Board shall be reported to the Board at the next meeting.

### Responsibilities of the Legislative and Advocacy Committee.

1. **Provide advocacy advice and assistance during legislative sessions.** Assists with advice and strategy development throughout the legislative session.
2. **Authority to make decisions.** The Committee is authorized to make time-sensitive decisions regarding support, testifying, and other real-time activities, as long as the decisions are congruent with MACD advocacy policies. The Committee can ask the appropriate Resolution Subcommittee to provide advice or a recommendation.
3. **Decisions during Session.** During the legislative session, the Legislative Committee has the authority to make decisions in the case of legislative bills, appointments, or other issues that clearly align or are in opposition to conservation district priorities. In those cases, MACD will testify 'in support of' or 'in opposition to' respectively. The Committee may also recommend MACD come in as 'informational.'
4. **Decision-making limitations.** If there is a contentious or more complicated issue being addressed by the legislature or no MACD policy to direct action exists; and timing allows, the decision for action should be deferred to the MACD Board.

Furthermore, the MACD Board can ask the appropriate subcommittee to provide advice or a recommendation. If the board feels an issue is very contentious, the board can choose to send the issue to districts for a vote/poll or refrain from making a formal decision.

5. **Assists in monitoring relevant policy activity.** Assists the executive director in monitoring relevant and interim session activities and policy issues throughout the year (local, state, and national).
6. **Testimony and support.** Assists with the compilation and editing of MACD letters and comments.

7. **Supports education of policy makers, conservation districts, and the public on issues pertaining to conservation districts.** Helps with educating stakeholders on conservation district priorities, challenges, and needs through communication with local conservation districts, meeting with policy makers, testimony, attending events and other activities as determined by the committee.