

NEWS RELEASE
MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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New PSC Commissioners Broaden Understanding of Utility Regulation

HELENA — Two newly-elected officials from the Montana Public Service Commission traveled to Washington, D.C., recently to participate in utility regulation training.

Bob Lake, R-Hamilton, and Kirk Bushman, R-Billings, said they returned from the Feb. 25-26 orientation with a greater understanding of utility regulation that will help them better serve Montana ratepayers.

The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, or NARUC, sponsored and paid for the training and travel. The Montana officials were joined by their counterparts serving on regulatory commissions in Kansas, Alabama, Arizona, New Hampshire, Utah, Wyoming and the District of Columbia.

Both Lake and Bushman discussed regulatory issues at length with fellow commissioners and other professionals in the regulatory field, while attending numerous training sessions. The training focused on topics ranging from key principles in accounting and finance to telecommunications, water regulation, the decision and rulemaking process, grid reliability and current issues in the natural gas and energy sectors.

“The trip helped to clarify the role of the commissioners while the hands-on process of learning from presenters serving as commissioners in their own states served as an invaluable source of information,” Commissioner Lake said.

Commissioner Bushman agreed. “Our top priority is ensuring that Montana ratepayers are receiving the safest, most reliable and affordable service possible,” he said. “As new commissioners, we’re meeting extensively with staff and participating in this type of training to ensure we have the knowledge base that’s essential to the job.”

After meeting with Montana’s congressional delegation, the commissioners flew back to Helena where they attended the PSC’s weekly business meeting.

Lake, Bushman and fellow new Commissioner Roger Koopman, R-Bozeman, plan to participate in ongoing training opportunities. Bushman and Koopman are scheduled to attend Michigan State University’s Institute of Public Utilities “Grid School” March 4-7 in Charleston, SC. The course will provide the commissioners with a detailed understanding of the country’s electricity grid, system upgrades and current issues impacting the transmission grid.

For more information, visit psc.mt.gov or contact PSC Communications/Research Director Justin Post at 406.444.6171. Follow the PSC at [Twitter.com/@MT_PSC](https://twitter.com/MT_PSC) or visit [Facebook.com/MontanaPSC](https://facebook.com/MontanaPSC).