

NAVIGATING THE LEGISLATURE

GOALS

- Demystify the legislative process and share experiences about how it all works.
- Share concrete tools with which to navigate the legislative session.
- Engage in the 2021 session!

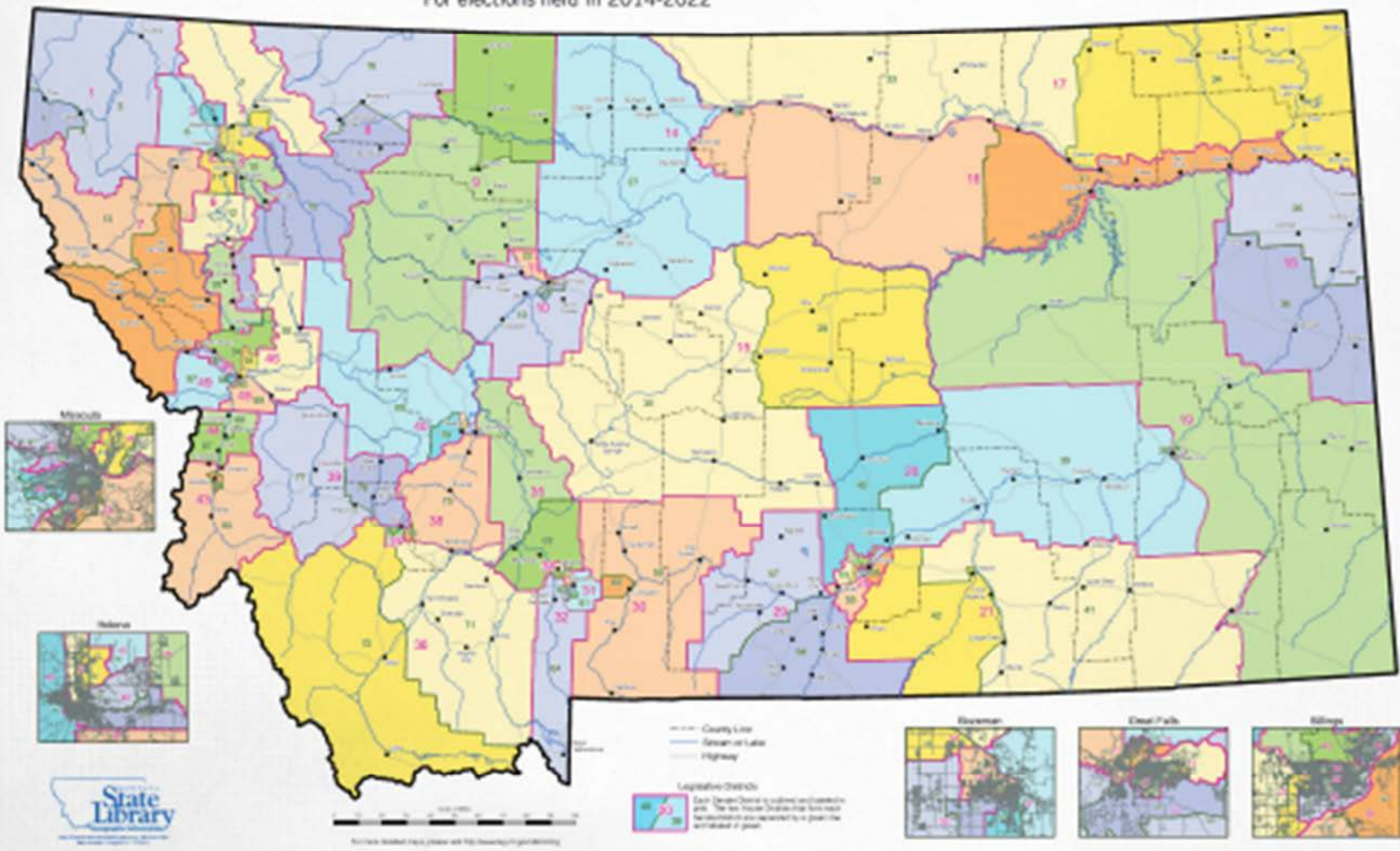
UNDERSTANDING THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

MONTANA'S LEGISLATIVE STRUCTURE

- Montana has 100 legislative districts
- 100 Representatives, 50 Senators
- Each representative represents one district, with about 10,000 people
- Each senator represents two districts (about 20,000 people)
- Meets every 2 years for 90 working days
- Representatives serve 2-year terms, and Senators serve 4-year terms
- Legislative elections take place in even-numbered years
- 8-year terms limits for each chamber

MONTANA LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS

For elections held in 2014-2022



COMMITTEES

HOUSE

- Agriculture
- Appropriations
- Business and Labor
- Education
- Ethics
- Energy, Telecommunications, and Federal Relations
- Fish, Wildlife, Parks
- Human Services
- Judiciary
- Legislative Administration
- Local Government
- Natural Resources
- Rules
- State Administration
- Taxation
- Transportation

SENATE

- Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation
- Business, Labor, and Economic Affairs
- Committee on Committees
- Education and Cultural Resources
- Energy and Telecommunications
- Ethics
- Finance and Claims
- Fish and Game
- Highways and Transportation
- Judiciary
- Legislative Administration
- Local Government
- Natural Resources
- Public Health, Welfare and Safety
- Rules
- State Admin
- Taxation

LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP

HOUSE

Speaker of the House: Wylie Galt, HD 30

Speaker Pro Tempore: Casey Knudson, HD 33

Majority Leader: Sue Vinton, HD 56

Minority Leader: Kim Abbott, HD 83

Majority Whips: Seth Berglee, Dennis Lenz, Lola Sheldon-Galloway, Derek Skees, Barry Usher

Minority Whips: Tyson Running Wolf, Laurie Bishop, Derek Harvey

Minority Caucus Chair: Marilyn Marler

SENATE

President of the Senate: Mark Blasdel, SD 4

President Pro Tempore: Jason Ellsworth, SD 43

Majority Leader: Cary Smith, SD 27

Minority Leader: Jill Cohenour, SD 42

Majority Whips: Doug Kary, Steve Fitzpatrick, Gordy Vance

Minority Whips: Pat Flowers, JP Pomnichowski, Diane Sands

LEGISLATIVE TIMELINE

February 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
JAN 31	1 Leg Day 21	2 Leg Day 22	3 Leg Day 23	4 Leg Day 24	5 Leg Day 25	6
7	8 Leg Day 26	9 Leg Day 27	10 Leg Day 28	11 Leg Day 29	12 Leg Day 30	13
14	15 Leg Day 31	16 Leg Day 32	17 Leg Day 33	18 Leg Day 34	19 Leg Day 35	20 Leg Day 36 Last day for Committee to request General Bills & Resolutions
21	22 Leg Day 37	23 Leg Day 38 Approx. last day for Approp Subcommittees	24 Leg Day 39 Last day to introduce General Bills (ex. Committee bills)	25 Leg Day 40	26 Leg Day 41	27 Leg Day 42
28						

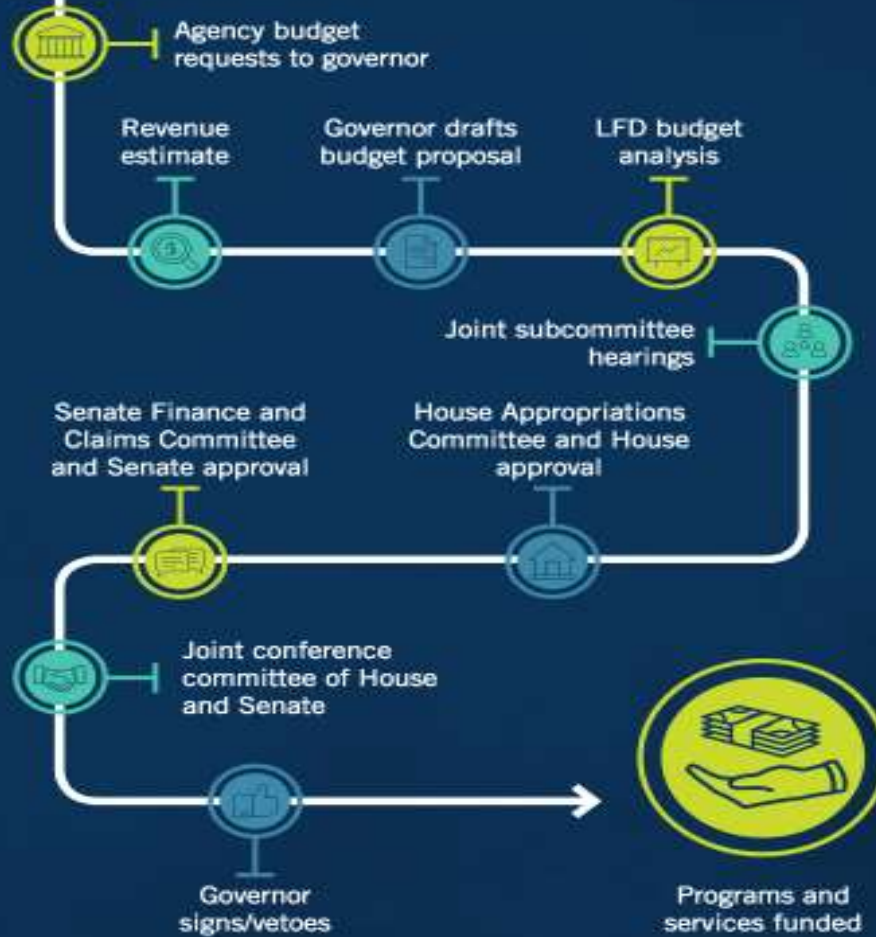
March 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Leg Day 43	2 Leg Day 44	3 Leg Day 45	4 Transmittal Break	5 Transmittal Break	6 Transmittal Break

THE BUDGET

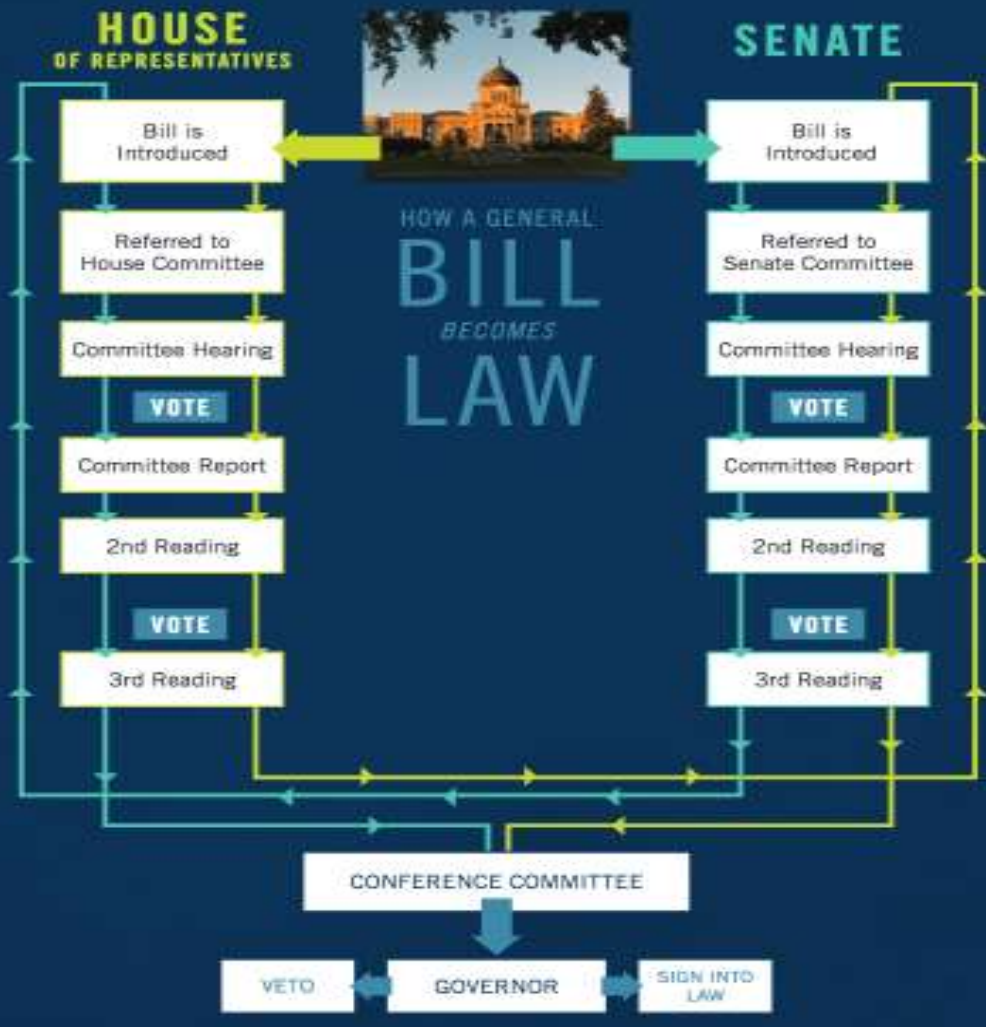
BUILDING A BUDGET

A GUIDE TO MONTANA'S PROCESS



HOW A GENERAL BILL BECOMES LAW

Non-budget bills follow a similar process. Below is a flowchart depicting how a bill becomes a law. Following this is a section detailing how to track legislative activity online. All information contained in the remainder of this section has been provided by the Montana Legislative Services Division.



TOOLS FOR NAVIGATING THE SESSION



Bill Search

Do you want to find a bill? Are you interested in bills by subject? Do you want to track bills using a preference list?

Look Up Bills



Legislator Search

Do you want to find out who represents you? What bills a legislator sponsors? Maybe you want to find contact information?

Look Up Legislators



[Click for More Information](#)

You can now provide testimony without coming to the Capitol:

Request To Testify Remotely/Upload Your Testimony



Legislative Meetings & Hearings are Streamed and Recorded

Watch/Listen To Meetings



THE SESSION

LAWS: LAWS.LEG.MT.GOV

MONTANA
LEGISLATIVE
BRANCH

Montana Legislature Look Up Bill Information

2019 January Regular Session



The 66th Regular Session of the Montana Legislature adjourned Sine Die on April 25th, 2019; Legislative day 87.

• View Detailed Bill Information for a Specific...

Bill Type and Number: (example: HJ0157)

- OR -

Bill Draft Number (LC#): (example: LC0064)

- OR -

Chapter Number: (example: 123)

NOTE: Chapter numbers exist only after session law is enacted during session.

• Basic Searching for Bills...

Select a Legislator...

(Legislator not on list?)

- OR -

Select a Subject...

- AND/OR -

Select a Primary Sponsor...

(Sponsor not on list?)

LIVE STREAMING



view



calendar



filter

Now Playing

New Recordings

Calendar-Day/Month

Calendar-Week

Calendar-Month

Calendar-Year

Children, Families, Health and Human Services Committee [1]



Info

Agenda

Hand

Description Children, Families, Health and Human Services - Video

Location Room 137

Scheduled Friday, Jan 17, 2020
08:00 - 16:30
8 Hours 30 Minutes

Actual Friday, Jan 17, 2020
08:02 - 17:14
9 Hours 11 Minutes

DOWNLOAD MEDIA

FIND A LEGISLATOR:
LEG.MT.GOV/LEGISLATOR-LOOKUP/

MONTANA STATE LEGISLATURE

LEGISLATOR LOOKUP

Home / Legislator Lookup

FIND A MONTANA LEGISLATOR

Not sure who represents you in the Montana Legislature? Need to know how to contact your legislator?
Here are some ways to find a Montana legislator:



By Address: [View a map](#) for which any Montana address can be entered to find legislator and district information.

By Name: Find information on your legislator by Session year on the the [Legislator Roster](#).

County Elections Office: Staff of your county election office can help you determine which legislative district you live in and who your representatives are. The [Montana Secretary of State's Office](#) includes contact information for county election offices on its website.

CONTACTING A LEGISLATOR

<https://leg.mt.gov/legislator-lookup/contacting-legislators/>

You can contact legislators by phone, email, mail, or fax (!!).

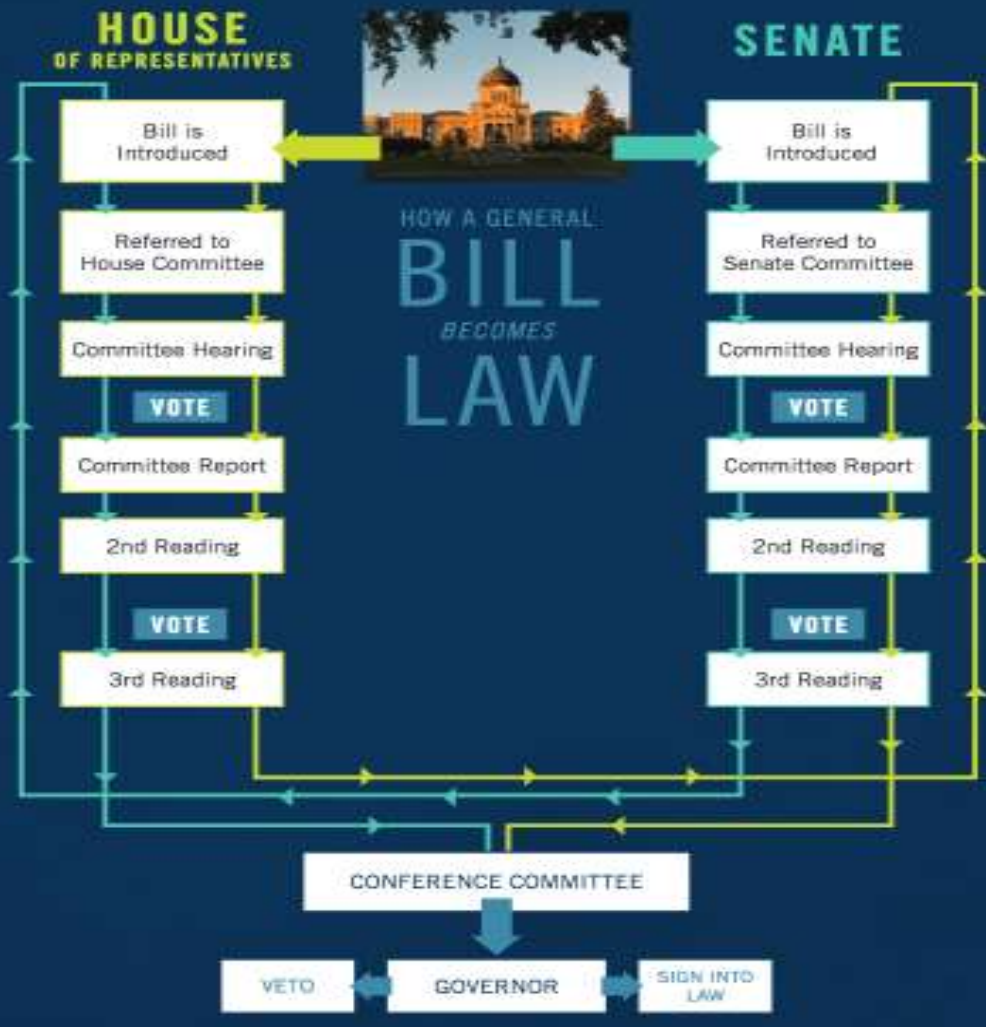
Legislative switchboard is open only during session,
7:30am-5pm.

406-444-4800

INFLUENCING THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

HOW A GENERAL BILL BECOMES LAW

Non-budget bills follow a similar process. Below is a flowchart depicting how a bill becomes a law. Following this is a section detailing how to track legislative activity online. All information contained in the remainder of this section has been provided by the Montana Legislative Services Division.



LEG.MT.GOV/SESSION/HAVE-YOUR-SAY

2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION – HOW TO HAVE YOUR SAY VIRTUALLY!

There are new ways to participate with new remote capabilities!

Request To Testify Remotely/Upload Your Testimony

- You will be able to select from the bills that are currently scheduled for hearing for the next 3 days.
- **By noon the day before** the hearing, you will be able to submit your written testimony, write a brief message, or request a Zoom link to testify in the bill hearing.
- Fill out the form with the pertinent details and submit. You will receive an email confirmation.
- You do not have to testify in order to submit written comments. Written comments received by the deadline will be distributed to all committee members. However, if you request a Zoom link, we request that you write a brief message in the event of technical difficulties so that your name will be entered into the record.
- If you wish to submit written testimony after the Noon deadline please call the Information Desk at (406) 444-4800 for assistance, or submit written comments using the web form: <https://leg.mt.gov/web-messaging/>
- Rules of decorum must be followed and the Presiding Officer will call on you when it is your turn to speak. Follow the Zoom directions and raise your hand to let the Remote Committee Coordinator know when you want to speak. We will not assume that because you requested the Zoom link that you automatically want to testify. There may be limits placed on how many people are allowed to testify remotely on each bill.



UPLOAD TESTIMONY/SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

- **Need to verify a bill is scheduled for a hearing?** [Click here for a list of bills scheduled to be heard in the next 4 days](#)
- **Need to look up committee information?** [Click here to go to the "LAWS Committee and Hearing Lookup Page"](#)
- **Need to look up Budget and Finance information?** [Click here for a list of Budget Committees](#)

Testimony and supporting documentation **MUST** be submitted by **NOON** the day before the hearing begins.

****ALL form fields are required unless otherwise noted**.**

SELECT BILL

Select the Bill:

Select One

[I don't see the bill I want.](#)

Select a committee to send testimony to:

Select a Bill

JAS is an abbreviation for "Joint Appropriations Subcommittee".

HOW TO TESTIFY AT A HEARING (INCLUDING VIRTUALLY)

1. Arrive early / log-in early.
2. Prep your testimony before the hearing.
3. Dress appropriately (or not! You're not on video if you testify remotely.)
4. Use legislative hearing protocol.
5. Be prepared to answer questions from the committee.

“Mister / Madam Chair, members of the committee, my name is _____, spelled _____. I'm from _____ and I represent _____. I'm speaking to support / oppose bill number XXX.”

“Mister / Madam Chair, Representative Smith, thank you for the question...”

OTHER WAYS TO INFLUENCE LEGISLATION IN 2021

- Write letters / emails to legislators
- Organize a phone bank
- Write a letter to the editor
- Use social media
- Collect personal stories
- ~~Hold a lobby day~~

THE STUFF NOBODY TELLS YOU ABOUT..

- Stairwells are a good place to catch legislators.
- You can send notes to legislators on the floor with a page for a dollar.
- You can find most legislators' cell numbers in the guide book and can text them if need be.
- Info desk on first floor has printouts of the day's hearings and floor sessions, including what bills are up.
- Sergeant at Arms has all sorts of good info, including daily events.
- Free food (and free food Twitter account)
- Basement cafeteria and third floor coffee bar
- Basement bill library, will print bills for you (costs \$)
- You can't bring your coffee (or other food and drink) into the galleries, and backpacks aren't allowed (though all other types of bags are).
- Basement bathrooms – single-stall and free supplies, open to public even though it doesn't look like it.
- Fourth floor bathroom has a nursing/pumping room (can also be used for privacy when need be).
- Nobody successfully works the session alone.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS!