

Montana Conservation Community
Legislative Hotlist, House of Representatives
Week 4: January 26, 2009

Please Support:

HB 20, Create weatherization account using oil and gas production tax, Rep. Dickenson (D-Great Falls). This bill would allocate 20% of oil and gas production tax money to a state weatherization account. The account will provide funds for the DPHHS home weatherization programs. Human Services, 01/23/2009, 3pm, Rm 152, pending committee vote. Contact Matt Leow, Northern Plains Resource Council, 406.396.1766, matt@northernplains.org.

HB 27, Eliminate the sunset for the Universal Systems Benefits Programs, Rep. Wiseman (D-Bozeman). This bill, unanimously recommended by the interim Energy and Telecommunications Committee, eliminates the sunset provision of the universal system benefit program (USBP), and gives a legislative interim committee direction to review the program regularly for oversight. Floor vote this week. Passed H FRET 14-0. Contact Anne Hedges, MEIC, 406.461.9546, ahedges@meic.org.

HB 98, Allow energy performance contracting for state buildings, Rep. Dick Barrett (D-Missoula). This bill allows the state, including the university system, to enter into energy performance contracts as a means to provide capital for energy efficiency improvements in buildings. Private companies implement energy savings technology improvements, and the state pays them back with monies garnered through energy savings. FRET, 01/14/09, 3pm, Rm 172, pending committee vote. Contact Matt Leow, Northern Plains Resource Council, 406.396.1766, matt@northernplains.org.

HB 190, Clarify bridge access law, Rep. Van Dyk (D-Billings). This bill provides a mechanism and funding for legal livestock fences at public right-of-ways on county bridges, so long as they allow public access. This measure aims to secure Montanan's constitutional right to access streams and rivers while respecting landowners' need to erect fences to manage livestock and protect private land. Floor vote this week. Passed (H) FW&P 16-2. Contact Mark Aagenes, Montana Trout Unlimited, 406.554.9265, mark@montanatu.org.

This hotlist is compiled by Montana Conservation Voters (contact Sarah Cobler, 581.2284 or sarah@mtvoters.org) as an educational service to lawmakers and citizens, weekly tracking key conservation-related legislative actions.

Alternative Energy Resource Organization * Clark Fork Coalition * Montana Audubon *
Montana Conservation Voters * MEIC * Montana Trout Unlimited * MontPIRG * Montana
Sierra Club * Montana Smart Growth Coalition * National Center for Appropriate
Technology * Natural Resources Defense Council * Northern Plains Resource Council

Please Oppose:

HB 140, Increase sustained yield for forest health, Rep. Vincent (R-Libby). This bill would give DNRC the authority to harvest more timber each year than it has determined is sustainable. It allows the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation to exceed the annual sustained yield for timber harvest on state school trust lands by 10% each year as long as the timber is being harvested through DNRC's contract timber harvest program. Last session a provision was added to allow DNRC to increase the sustained yield by 5% if it was done with the contract timber harvest program. This raises that amount another 5%. Natural Resources, 01/28/2009, 3pm, Rm 472. Contact Anne Hedges, MEIC, 406.461.9546, or ahedges@meic.org.

HB 79, Uniform provisions for state land transactions, Rep. Stahl (R-Saco). This bill prohibits a net gain in land ownership by the state. This would disallow Fish Wildlife and Parks from purchasing land under the Habitat Montana program, land for new parks, or projects like the purchase of Plum Creek property under the proposed Working Forests Initiative. Natural Resources, 01/19/2009, 3pm, Rm 472, pending committee vote. Contact Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon, 431.9157 or jellis@mtaudubon.org.

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