

Legislative Action Program

Week Five



Agenda

- Go over past week's updates from leg
- Debrief on last week's action items
- Misc updates
- This week's action items
- Discussion & updates from counties

Week Four in the Legislature

- Gianforte's state of the state and Shannon O'Brien's rebuttal
 - The Gov: tax cuts (for the rich...), business, abortion, the southern border
 - O'Brien: affordable housing, fair tax relief, education
- Stromswold's replacement appointed: Naarah Hastings
- Flament's replacement appointed: Ed Butcher
 - Both seemingly hyper-conservative, culture-war type Republicans
- SB 121 - tax cut bill, passed 2nd reading- would save top earners \$6k/year, and average Montanans \$50/year
- HB 303, Implement medical ethics and diversity act, scheduled for last minute hearing this morning in an attempt to limit opposing testimony

SB-99, Provide for a youth health protection act

- Sen. Fuller's (R-Kalispell) anti-trans bill
- Hearing on Friday over 5 hours long
- Opponents greatly outnumbered proponents
- Testimony from medical professionals, educators, parents, trans youth
- Moving testimony from many, notably Rep. Zephyr
- Prognosis: will likely pass committee (Judiciary is stacked with anti-LGBTQ law makers), but passage by Senate unknown - similar bill failed in 2021

Last Week's Action Alerts

- HB 252, Youth behavioral health screening
 - Karlen proposed clarifying amendment, still in committee
- HB 2, Funding for Childcare
 - Still in committee
- HB 2, Funding for Tribal Communities and Members
 - Still in committee
- SB 99, Provide for a youth health protection act
 - Still in committee
- HB 287 Revise laws related to Indian language preservation
 - Still in committee
- SB 154, Sen. Regier's bill claiming the right to privacy does not include abortion
 - Passed the Senate, transmitted to House
 - Despite this, some R's recognized ridiculousness of this bill
 - McKamey "privacy is privacy, if enacted this bill would be unconstitutional"
- HB 152, Mercer's bill easing licensing restrictions
 - Passed Senate, transmitted to House

Coming up: Montana Future Fund

- Preview of Dem plan to be released tomorrow (keep on DL until then please)
- Gov's tax plan - \$1B bundle of tax giveaways to wealthy
- Dem alternative: MT Future Fund
 - Responsible, strategic plan to save & generate funds
 - \$500 M immediate funding for conservation, workforce housing, workforce development, child care, healthcare, senior care
 - \$1 B in a trust to generate interest \$ for the state
- Support for this: Letters to the editor volunteers - to write or sign

Recruitment Ads

- Going up on FB and Instagram
- Targeting likely Dems across the state
- We will connect those who sign up with their central committee





**LAND &
WILDLIFE**
CONSERVATION



**WORK
FORCE**
HOUSING



AFFORDABLE
CHILD
CARE



**HEALTH &
SENIOR**
CARE



**WORK
FORCE**
DEVELOPMENT

SAVES \$1 BILLION

TO GENERATE FUTURE RESOURCES
millions of dollars to invest every year, forever

SENDS \$500 MILLION

OUT THE DOOR NOW
to strengthen our communities & economy



introducing the

\$1.5 BILLION

**MONTANA
FUTURE
FUND**



@MTHOUSEDEMS



@MTSENATEDEMS



Priority Bills of the Week



PRIORITY BILL
OF THE WEEK

- We will be flagging 1-3 of these each week
- Aim is to help direct volunteer efforts
- If you have folks who have a certain amount of time per week to volunteer, direct them to these bills as the most important to testify on

Christian Nationalism Speaker

- Response to NYT article
- Historian Bruce Gourley to present, answer questions
- Opportunity for us to learn together
- February 9th, 6 PM, Zoom
- Registration link in your email

Action Alerts



PRIORITY BILL
OF THE WEEK

What: [HB 280](#), Providing for circuit breaker income tax credit for property taxes paid

Position: SUPPORT

When: Tuesday, January 31st @ 9 am

Where: House Taxation Committee - Room 152 - [Sign up to testify or submit written comment](#)

Talking Points:

- Montana property taxes are too high for many Montanans, particularly affecting seniors on fixed income, but it's hitting every Montana homeowner in their pocketbooks
- A one time relief payment will only be a bandaid to the problem and won't do anything to stop Property Taxes to continue to grow
- This bill would provide ongoing protection against rising property tax bills for working Montanans by making sure that families' property tax bills never rise above a set percentage of their annual income (aka circuit breaker)
- [personal story about property taxes]

Action Alerts



PRIORITY BILL
OF THE WEEK

What: [HB 285](#), Increase earned income tax credit and link to inflation

Position: SUPPORT

When: Tuesday, January 31st @ 9 am

Where: House Taxation Committee - Room 152 - [Sign up to testify or submit written comment](#)

Talking Points:

- This will put money back in working families' pockets
- Instead of big tax handouts that disproportionately benefit the wealthiest Montanans, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) will ensure it is working people who will see the real benefits of tax relief and have the freedom to fully participate in our communities
- An increase in the EITC, means the difference between covering a surprise car repair and losing transportation to go to work, or affording health care in an emergency or going into debt
- Most importantly, this tax credit will rise as the cost of living does, to ensure that families' tax cuts don't get eaten away by inflation
- The Governor included EITC in his budget – we're happy to see him include Democrat policies in his budget, but we don't think his EITC goes far enough, especially as the cost of living continues to rise.
- The Governor's giving thousands and thousands of dollars to the wealthy in the form of tax breaks. This bill will help ensure that working families will also see tax relief

Action Alerts

What: [HB 306](#), Require candidates for office be registered to vote

Position: DO NOT SUPPORT

When: Tuesday, January 31st @ 9 am

Where: [House State Administration Committee](#) - Room 455 - [Sign up to testify or submit written comment](#)

Goal: 5+ in person/zoom, unlimited calls/emails

Talking Points:

- This bill raises serious concerns about the possibility of *who* they could make ineligible to register to vote in the long run and how this could affect people's ability to run for office. If they continue to make it harder for some folks to register to vote, those same people will find it harder if not impossible to run for office
- Possibly unconstitutional as the Montana State Constitution AND the US Constitution expressly layout requirements for running for office
- This issue is top of mind because of Mallerie Stromswold's decision to resign. It's already difficult for people to run for office and serve as an elected official, there are a lot of ways that this bill could potentially bar underrepresented groups from serving in the future

Action Alerts

What: [HB 317](#), Provide for the Montana Indian Child Welfare Act

Position: SUPPORT

When: Wednesday, February 1st @ 3 pm

Where: [House Human Services Committee](#) - Room 152 - [Sign up to testify or submit written comment](#)

Goal: 5+ in person/zoom, unlimited calls/emails

Talking Points:

- Native american children deserve to be with their families, and in places that honor the unique values of the Indian child's tribal culture

Action Alerts

What: [HB 201](#), Revise minimum wage laws

Position: SUPPORT

When: Thursday, February 2nd @ 8:30 am

Where: [House Business and Labor Committee](#), Room 172 - [Sign up to testify or submit written comment](#)

Goal: 5+ in person/zoom, unlimited calls/emails to the committee

Talking Points:

- The cost of everything, including, goods, services, and housing is skyrocketing in Montana
- Higher earnings will improve the overall standard of living and allow minimum wage workers to invest more of their earnings back into the economy and support local businesses as consumer spending will increase
- This minimum wage increase isn't extreme, but still provides a more propionate income level to handle the cost of living increases
- Raising the minimum wage will allow more families to move out of poverty and reduce the need for state and federal government assistance programs
- Sufficient wages spurs motivation in employees to put in their best effort on the job, and help increase employee retention

Action Alerts

What: [HJ 4](#), Joint resolution in support of the Montana Trail 406 Network

Position: SUPPORT

When: Wednesday, February 1st @ 3 pm

Where: [House Natural Resources Committee](#) - Room 172 - [Sign up to testify or submit written comment](#)

Goal: 3+ in person/zoom, unlimited calls, emails

Talking Points:

- Outdoor recreation is a part of our Montana way of life and provides Montana jobs, and brings revenue to the state
- The Montana Trail 406 is a roughly 1500 mile long route that many Montanans enjoy year-round
- This trail will provide an abundance of recreational opportunities and economic incentives

Feb 1 Get Together

- Those coming to Helena for rally for the constitution- join us at the MDP office at 3 PM for coffee and conversation!
- Sheila, Scott & staff look forward to seeing folks

Discussion