

Please Support:

SB 190, Establish monitoring and reporting requirements for greenhouse gas emissions, Sen. Mike Phillips (D-Bozeman), Hearing, Senate Natural Resources, 2/22/17 at 3pm, Rm. 303, Support. This bill creates a Montana solution for addressing climate change in the absence of action at the federal level. By identifying major sources of greenhouse emissions and establishing fees for those emissions, businesses would have an incentive to reduce emissions and lower their impact on climate change. The Department of Environmental Quality would also report to EQC on a plan to address the causes and effects of climate change in Montana including the impacts on our "economy, environment, and public health." Contact Neal Ullman, Montana Conservation Voters, 431.0171, neal@mtvoters.org.

SB 247, Prohibit neonicotinoid insecticides, Sen. Mike Phillips (D-Bozeman), Senate Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Pending Executive Action, Support. This bill creates the "Saving Montana's Pollinators Act" to protect Montana's native bees and other pollinators, including birds and animals, from exposure to neonicotinoid insecticides. These are used on seeds and plants and affect the central nervous system of the animals exposed. This bill prohibits this type of chemical from being used on public and state lands and in outdoor commercial and residential settings. This is a good bill because these chemicals are linked to rapid declines in bee, other insect, and pollinator numbers, and are persistent in soil and transported by dust, air and water. Contact Amy Seaman, Montana Audubon, 210.9449, aseaman@mtaudubon.org.

SJ 17, Resolution supporting federal land management, Sen. Diane Sands (D-Missoula), Hearing, Senate Natural Resources, 2/22/17 at 3pm, Rm. 303, Support. This resolution draws a clear line in the sand of Montanans' opposition to the transfer or sell-off of our public lands. The value our public lands bring to our "economy, recreation, heritage, and quality of life" should not be jeopardized and the resolution would let out-of-state special interests and Washington, DC know our public lands are not for sale. Contact Neal Ullman, Montana Conservation Voters, 431.0171, neal@mtvoters.org.

Please Oppose:

SB 98, Establish property ownership fairness act, Sen. Cary Smith (R-Billings), Scheduled for 2nd Reading, 2/22/17, Oppose. This is a radical takings bill that attempts to force state and local governments to pay a property owner anytime a regulation decreases the value of their property regardless of the need to protect public health, safety and welfare. Similar measures have been defeated in previous legislative sessions because these takings bills try to prevented government from balancing the rights of neighbors. Instead governments would be required to favor an individual property owner regardless of the harm their actions may cause to the neighbors or community. Contact Anne Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center, 461.9546, ahedges@meic.org.

The Weekly Hotlist is published as an educational service to lawmakers and citizens by the Conservation Working Group, comprised of the organizations listed below. Contact Neal Ullman, Montana Conservation Voters at 254-1593 ext 3.

Montana Senate Conservation Hotlist Week 8: February 20th, 2017

SB 154, Revise net metering incentives, Sen. Mike Lang (R-Malta), Senate Energy and Telecommunications, Pending 2nd Reading, Oppose. This bill indiscriminately targets net metering systems in Montana tax code. By arbitrarily carving net metering out from other clean energy projects, SB 154 creates a level of uncertainty for Montanans to make energy decisions by targeting net metering, but not other clean energy projects, in current tax law. This benefits public utilities like NorthWestern Energy while leaving Montana home and business owners out in the cold. Contact Brian Fadie, Montana Environmental Information Center, 210.7591, bfadie@meic.org.

SB 277, Prohibit use of alternative energy loan account for virtual net metering, Sen. Tom Richmond (R-Billings), Senate Energy and Telecommunications, Pending Executive Action, Oppose. The 2001 legislature established the Alternative Energy Revolving Loan Program to encourage Montana homeowners and small businesses to use renewable energy. "Virtual net metering" (i.e. community solar) is a way for individuals and businesses to invest in solar that don't have a roof or land area well situated for it. Community solar fits extremely well with the goals of this successful loan program and should not be disallowed. Contact Brian Fadie, Montana Environmental Information Center, 210.7591, bfadie@meic.org.

SB 248, Revise laws regarding exempt wells and family transfer parcels, Sen. Mark Blasdel (R-Kalispell), Pending 2nd Reading, Oppose. Allows anyone using the family transfer exemption in the subdivision and platting act to also be guaranteed an exemption from obtaining a water right for a well that pumps up to 35 gallons per minute. The family transfer exemption is already a big exemption in the subdivision law, and this bill would compound the problem. Contact Anne Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center, 461.9546, ahedges@meic.org.