PLEASE SUPPORT

HB 78, Require public hearings for utility planning, Rep. Zac Perry (D-Hungry Horse) 
House Floor Vote, 1/28/19 at 1 p.m., Support. Bill requires for-profit utilities (i.e. NorthWestern Energy and Montana-Dakota Utilities) hold at least two public meetings as part of their long-term resource planning processes. It’s a step forward for transparency and consumer protection by allowing more experts to provide perspective and feedback to a utility, reducing the likelihood a utility makes poor or overpriced investments (the cost of which fall on ratepayers). All other major utilities in the northwest hold open planning meetings - only NorthWestern does not. HB 78 passed unanimously out of the Energy Interim Committee and 11-1 from House energy committee. Contact Brian Fadie, MEIC, 406.210.7591

HB 165, Phaseout use of Styrofoam, Rep. Marler (D-Missoula) 
Hearing in House Business and Labor, 1/28/2019 at 10 a.m., Rm. 172 Support. This bill would require the food and restaurant industry in the state to phase out the use of Styrofoam starting in 2022. Styrofoam is harmful to public health when it is produced as well as when harmful pollutants leach into food and drink. It also creates a waste stream that doesn't break down in the environment. Contact Malcolm Gilbert, MEIC, 406.443.2520; Wyatt Smith, Montana Audubon, 406.241.7897; or Julian Adler, MontPIRG, 406.544.3633

HB 193, Establish a carbon tax and distribute revenue, Rep. Dunwell (D-Helena) 
House Taxation, Hearing 1/31/2019 at 9 a.m., Rm. 152 Support. Bill would require large sources of greenhouse gases (i.e., coal-fired power plants and refineries) to pay $10 per ton of greenhouse gases that they emit. It also would require the state to develop and implement a modest plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions below 2005 levels by 25% by 2035 and 50% by 2050. This bill would require large industrial polluters to incorporate climate risks caused by greenhouse gases into the cost of doing business. The revenue generated by HB 193 would go toward coal community transition, remediation of contaminated sites, economic development, infrastructure and the state general fund. Contact Anne Hedges, MEIC, 406.461.9546

HB 241, Require public utilities to report a plan for 100% renewable use, Rep. Andrea Olsen (D-Missoula) 
H-Energy, Technology, and Federal Relations, Support. Throughout the country 100% clean energy goals are rapidly becoming mainstream. California - one of the largest economies in the world - and Hawaii both passed state laws to achieve 100% carbon-free electricity by 2045. In Washington state, legislation has been introduced to require them to achieve 100% clean energy also by 2045. Additionally, over 100 cities around the country have committed to 100% clean energy goals. Mapping out the options, timelines, challenges, and benefits for Montana public utilities to reach 100% clean energy would be a prudent step forward. Contact Brian Fadie, Montana Environmental Information Center, 406.210.7591

HB 271 Revise laws related to siting pipeline, Rep. Bridget Smith (D-Wolf Point) 
House Natural Resources Committee, Hearing 1/30/2019 at 3 pm, Rm. 172, Support. Bill requires that new pipelines, such as the Keystone XL Pipeline, be located within the footprint of existing pipeline infrastructure and that the pipeline avoid sensitive areas such as state parks, federal Wilderness areas, and tribally recognized cultural sites. HB 271 also requires installation of shut-off valves to protect critical freshwater resources, and a more thorough analysis of a proposed
pipeline’s impacts to Montana heritage properties. The bill also requires that the pipeline be constructed within seven years of permit approval. Contact Derf Johnson, MEIC, 406.581.4634

PLEASE OPPOSE

**HB 144, Eliminate certain tax credits, Rep. Redfield (R-Livingston)** House Taxation, Hearing 1/24/19 at 9am, Rm. 124, Oppose. HB 144 would harm solar jobs and deter local investment by thousands of Montanans by eliminating tax incentives for rooftop solar systems. Instead of seeking to help these new jobs and businesses grow, this bill bluntly targets net metering tax credits for elimination. When the Republican controlled legislature first passed net metering in 1999, it found that “it is in the public interest to promote net metering because it encourages private investment in renewable energy resources, stimulates Montana’s economic growth, and enhances the continued diversification of the energy resources used in Montana.” The elimination of these tax credits would do the exact opposite. Contact Andrew Valainis, Montana Renewable Energy Association, 406.214.9405

**HB 161, Establish requirements for fish and wildlife decision making processes, Rep. Tschida (R-Missoula)** House Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Oppose. This bill seeks to limit consideration of almost everyone in decisions on public fish and wildlife management. It would narrow the people the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission to only landowners and take the public out of wildlife. It seeks to remove social science and people's opinions and removes several times from state law the enjoyment by the public of wildlife, replacing it with the use. Contact Nick Gevock, MWF, 406.533.943

**HJ 4, Resolution to congress to streamline/take control of the exportation of coal, Rep. Read (R-Ronan)** House Natural Resources, Hearing 1/30/2019 at 3 p.m., Rm.172, Oppose. This would send a message from the Montana legislature to the federal government to act against the state of Washington for denying a permit to the Millennium Bulk Terminal Port Facility. The Millennium Terminal would allow for a massive increase of coal exports from Montana which would mean hundreds of additional coal trains travelling through Montana cities and towns bringing traffic, noise, and increased danger of derailment all while undermining vital work to move away from energy sources that amplify climate change. Contact Cody Ferguson, NPRC, 509.845.9309; or Derf Johnson, MEIC, 406.443.2520.

*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 Alex Rich, Montana Conservation Voters at 406.254.1593 ext. 2.*