Please Support:

**SB 24**, Increase optional light motor vehicle registration fee for parks and recreation, Sen. Terry Gauthier (R-Helena), H-Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Support. This bill would increase funding for trails and outdoor recreation by increasing the voluntary motor vehicle registration donation from six to nine dollars to generate an additional estimated $1.8 million for trails, State Parks, and fishing access sites. Contact Noah Marion, Montana Wilderness Association, 406.624.9622, nmarion@wildmontana.org

**SB 173**, Revise laws related to electric vehicle charging stations, Sen. Terry Gauthier (R-Helena), Hearing H-Judiciary 4/10, Support. SB 173 enacts a $25 fine and allows for towing of a non-electric vehicle if parked in an electric vehicle charging station parking spot. A charging station is a significant investment for a business owner, often designed to help attract customers. This bill creates a deterrence to the blocking of that investment and the adoption of electric vehicles. Contact Brian Fadie, Montana Environmental Information Center, 406-210-7591, bfadie@meic.org

**SB 201**, Revise requirements to hold a mining permit, Sen. Duane Ankney (R-Colstrip), House Third Reading 4/8, Support. SB 201 would require companies that hold a coal mining permit under federal law to post a bond to cover worker pensions if the company is in bankruptcy or reorganization. Contact Anne Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center, 406-443-2520 or Cody Ferguson with NPRC 509-845-9309, cody@northernplains.org

**SB 245**, Establish commercial property assessed clean energy program, Sen. Mary McNally (D-Billings), Hearing H-Taxation 4/8, Support. Montana businesses and organizations often face high utility bills due to old or inefficient structures in need of efficiency upgrades but the upfront cost of these upgrades can pose a financial challenge. SB 245 offers a Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) program to overcome this financing gap, generating economic development and jobs and saving money in the long run and allows property owners can make energy and water efficiency upgrades to their properties using 100% upfront financing from private capital lenders who opt-into the program. CPACE financing uses the same system we use to finance streetlights, sidewalks, parks – as an assessment on the annual property tax bill. The program allows finance terms for up to 20 years, so property owners are cash flow positive from the start. This is a voluntary program. Contact Cody Ferguson, Northern Plains Resource Council, 509.845.9309, cody@northernplains.org

**SB 337**, Revise income tax credit for alternative energy generation, Sen. Jeffrey Welborn (R-Dillon), Hearing H-Taxation 4/10, Support. Existing hydro dams that do not currently have electricity generators would be granted access to an existing tax credit for installing electricity generators. Contact Brian Fadie, Montana Environmental Information Center, 406.210.7591, bfadie@meic.org

**HJ 38**, Interim study of bonding and decommissioning for energy resources, Rep. Daniel Zolnikov (R-Billings), S-Energy & Telecommunications, Support. HJ 38 calls for a study of existing laws related to bonding, decommissioning, and reclamation for power plants in Montana of all fuel types. Contact Brian Fadie, Montana Environmental Information Center, 406.443.2520, bfadie@meic.org

Please Oppose:

SB 252, Revise Major Facility Siting Act Amendment Process, Sen. Duane Ankney (R-Colstrip), House Third Reading 4/8, Oppose. This bill would allow the owners of the Colstrip plant to avoid going through a public process and obtain coal from a mine other than the neighboring Rosebud mine, thereby increasing costs, decreasing revenue to the state of Montana and its workers, and importing coal from Wyoming. Contact Anne Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center, 406.461.9546, ahedges@meic.org

SB 299, Generally revise laws related to sage grouse conservation, Sen. Mike Lang (R-Malta), House Third Reading 4/8, Oppose. SB 299 is the first major legislative attempt to gut the sage-grouse Stewardship Act. This bill would exempt certain current land-uses from provisions of the plan, lower the bar for mitigation plan approval, reduce the mitigation value of conservation easements and add a number of oversight team reporting requirements. The bill requires the program to balance economic incentives with conserving sage-grouse for each independent project, losing focus of the big picture - balancing sage-grouse conservation with the state-wide socioeconomic impact of a potential Endangered Species Listing. Contact Amy Seaman, MT Audubon, 406.210.9449, aseaman@mtaudubon.org or Whitney Tawney, Montana Conservation Voters, 406.254-1593, whitney@mtvoter.org

SB 329, Allow for extension of state coal leases, Sen. Tom Richmond (R-Billings), Hearing H-Natural Resources 4/8 3pm, Oppose. SB 329 would require the state to extend the lease for the Otter Creek coal mine for another decade. The extension would deprive the state of the revenue that a new lease would require. A similar bill was vetoed by Gov. Bullock in 2017. Contact Cody Ferguson, Northern Plains Resource Council, 509-845-9309, cody@northernplains.org

SB 331, Establish the Montana energy security act, Sen. Tom Richmond (R-Billings), Hearing H-Energy 4/8 3pm, Oppose. SB 331 may be a different bill number than Richmond's SB 278, but it's exactly the same concept. This bill gives NorthWestern Energy control over the amount of money its customers would be forced to pay for the Colstrip power plant. SB 331 bypasses the normal oversight of the Montana Public Service Commission and allows NorthWestern to pass on to customers all remediation and decommissioning costs for its existing and any new interest in the Colstrip plant, along with $40 million in whatever costs NorthWestern desires for an increased ownership share of the plant. Contact Anne Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center, 406.461.9546, ahedges@meic.org

HB 22, Revise electricity supply resource contract length, Rep. Laurie Bishop (D-Livingston), Returned to House with amendments, Oppose. HB 22 was hijacked in the Senate with unfriendly amendments. A state court judge just ruled 15 year contracts do not comport with state law requiring contracts be long enough to enhance a project's economic feasibility. NorthWestern itself has said it cannot build a power plant on just 15 year contracts. Contact Brian Fadie, Montana Environmental Information Center, 406.210.7591, bfadie@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 Alex Rich, Montana Conservation Voters at 406.254.1593 ext. 2.