Please Support:

SB 24, Increase optional light motor vehicle registration fee for parks and recreation, Sen. Terry Gauthier (R-Helena), Concurred in H-Appropriations, 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 337, Revise income tax credit for alternative energy generation, Sen. Jeffrey Welborn (R-Dillon), House 3rd Reading 4/15, 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

Please Oppose:

SB 331, Establish the Montana Energy Security Act, Sen. Tom Richmond (R-Billings), House 2nd Reading 4/15, 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 403, Generally revise coal tax laws, Rep. Barry Usher (R-Billings), Returned to House with Amendments, Oppose. HB 403 would indefinitely extend a temporary tax exemption for underground coal mines and cost state and local governments $3.4 million a year. Contact Anne Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center, 461-9546, ahedges@meic.org

HB 722, Allow transfer of hard rock mining permit, Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-Libby), Returned to House with Amendments, Oppose. Allows the Department of Environmental Quality to use remediation bonds at hardrock mines to be used for things other than remediation. The bill says that DEQ can use remediation bonds for "maintenance, monitoring, and other actions," rather than requiring increased bonds to cover those ongoing activities at the mine. This bill will deplete funding available for actual remediation work. Contact Derf Johnson, Montana Environmental Information Center, djohnson@meic.org, 406.581.4634

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.