

MINUTES

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 54th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION

COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Call to Order: By **CHAIRMAN WILLIAM BOHARSKI**, on January 17, 1995, at 3:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Rep. William E. Boharski, Chairman (R)
Rep. Jack R. Herron, Vice Chairman (Majority) (R)
Rep. David Ewer, Vice Chairman (Minority) (D)
Rep. Chris Ahner (R)
Rep. Shiell Anderson (R)
Rep. Ellen Bergman (R)
Rep. John C. Bohlinger (R)
Rep. Matt Brainard (R)
Rep. Matt Denny (R)
Rep. Rose Forbes (R)
Rep. Antoinette R. Hagener (D)
Rep. Bob Keenan (R)
Rep. Linda McCulloch (D)
Rep. Jeanette S. McKee (R)
Rep. Norm Mills (R)
Rep. Debbie Shea (D)
Rep. Joe Tropila (D)
Rep. Diana E. Wyatt (D)

Members Excused: None

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Bart Campbell, Legislative Council
Evelyn Burris, Committee Secretary

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing: HB 154, HB 159, HB 185
Executive Action: HB 103 TABLED
HB 115 DO PASS AS AMENDED

HEARING ON HB 154

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REP. BETTY LOU KASTEN, HD 99, presented by saying this bill will allow local governments to vote more than once on the funding for

medical facilities within the county. As the statutes now stand, the vote is taken in primary years. This would allow the government, if the mill levy fails, to propose either in the general or the school election. **REP. KASTEN** then referred to a letter from **Nickolas C Murnion, Garfield County Attorney**, (EXHIBIT 1) regarding background on the Garfield County Health Center facility. The funding that was voted down was the funding that had kept their old facility open.

Proponents' Testimony:

Gordon Morris, Director, Montana Association of Counties (MACO), concurred with **REP. KASTEN'S** statements and asked for the committee's support of **HB 154**.

Bob Olsen, Montana Hospital Association, stated they support this bill and asked for a do pass recommendation.

Opponents' Testimony: None

Informational Testimony: None

Questions From Committee Members and Responses:

REP. JOE TROPILA referred to line 28 of the bill stating school elections and regular elections are held under two different titles and he then questioned if it would be legal to hold the school election unless it was approved by sources other than themselves. He suggested it should be looked at by the Secretary of State's Office. **REP. TROPILA** agreed this is a good bill.

REP. KASTEN responded that this was researched and there was no conflict so that is why both the general and the school election were included. The school election would be held pursuant to 23-304.

REP. MILLS asked for clarification on if the school election has to fail first or could they come in any year with a request because of need.

REP. KASTEN responded it could only be brought in at primaries, so in essence, if the bill would pass as it is drawn out, it could be brought in at the primary, general, or the next school election, and then it would be back to the primary election.

REP. MILLS asked for clarification on whether they can bring the original request in not just on the regular election but any election listed on lines 27, 28 and 29. **REP. KASTEN** responded that **Mr. Morris** agreed that was correct.

Closing by Sponsor:

REP. KASTEN urged a do pass on **HB 154**.

HEARING ON HB 185Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REP. ERNEST BERGSAGEL, HD 95, said this bill was presented at the request of the legislative audit committee. During the course of an audit, it was found that the Department of Commerce was not able to comply with the law. The law states when they make a payment back to the county it has to be in a fixed dollar amount and if they do not have a fixed dollar amount, they are unable to make the payments back. The Department of Commerce made a percentage payment back and it was technically in non-compliance with the law, but within the intent of the law.

Proponents' Testimony: None

Opponents' Testimony: None

Informational Testimony: None

Questions From Committee Members and Responses:

REP. DAVID EWER asked for input and background on this bill from the Department of Commerce.

Rob McCracken, representing the Department of Commerce, responded that HB 185 is a housekeeping bill. The county land planning fund statute requires the Department of Commerce to provide a \$3,000 minimum payment and after that point they apply a 60/40 formula. Because the coal tax revenue is going down, they were unable to make the payment, so this would substitute an equal percentage up to the \$3,000 so when coal revenues are down, they can provide an even floor for all counties.

REP. NORM MILLS asked Mr. McCracken for clarification if an equal percentage means each county gets the same amount of money no matter what the size of the county population. Mr. McCracken responded that was correct, up to the \$3,000 and after the \$3,000 it would be based on the 60/40 formula; 60% based on total population, 40% based on the land area.

REP. MATT BRAINARD asked if the \$3,000 is meant to be a sum for each county or the aggregate sum for all the counties. Mr. McCracken said the intent was that there be a minimum for each county. The \$3,000 was a floor that the legislature established so that every county would get a minimum amount. They are not able to do that because with coal tax revenues being below that, the equal percentage would apply. For FY96 they would project approximately a total of \$170,500 for the entire county land planning fund pot and of that, each county, based on that projection would get at least \$3,000. That's a new projection based on increasing coal revenues. If they don't fall that high, if there were only enough to give every county \$2,500 they would give that equally. If substantial coal revenues were generated

at the end of the fiscal year, they would then apply the 60/40 formula once they were over \$3,000.

Closing by Sponsor: Sponsor closed.

HEARING ON HB 159

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REP. CLIFF TREXLER stated this legislation is brought by the county commissioners and the clerk and recorder of Ravalli County, referring to it as a housekeeping bill. It is basically proposed to save money each year. Each year they spend between \$5,000 and \$8,000 dollars for portions of elections in which there is no competition. He then referred to the bill reading Section 1 lines 13-22. REP. TREXLER explained he was talking about conservation, irrigation, ditch, and fire districts and hospital boards. In Ravalli County they have several conservation districts and ditch districts, they found somebody to run, one name on the ballot, there's no competition and no charge for the filing so there's no reason if someone wanted to file that they could not file. It takes time, bookkeeping and costs some money. It was suggested by Joe Kerwin, Secretary of State's Office, that it should be added to (4) the term "in an annual election." This would then clarify the same as (3). REP. TREXLER asked the committee for a Do Pass.

Proponents' Testimony: None

Opponents' Testimony: None

Informational Testimony: None

Questions From Committee Members and Responses:

REP. MATT BRAINARD asked if any of these are paid positions. REP. TREXLER responded basically not; however, some of the positions are given stipends for expenses. Conservation districts do pay travel expenses, for example, when inspecting a ditch.

REP. TROPILA asked if this would preclude anyone from writing someone in. REP. TREXLER responded yes, in cases where no one would be running, the election would be cancelled and there would not be a place for a write in. There is no charge for filing. It doesn't preclude anyone, it's just a matter of having to think about it sooner.

REP. EWER noted that he did not see in the statute the limitation that REP. TREXLER talked about and he asked to have some official assurance as to precisely what the elected positions are. If they passed this statute, there is no write in, one person is on it and it's by acclamation. There are examples in Montana where

write-ins have come in and received more votes than the person on the ballot.

Joe Kerwin, Election Bureau Chief, Secretary of State's Office, said it is his understanding this bill will cover local election, fire and hospital, irrigation, and drainage districts and could possibly include school districts as well which are held annually. If the sole nominee is elected by acclamation, they may take away the opportunity for a write-in campaign. They can currently file anytime up to fifteen days before the election to have their votes counted. This would not allow for write-in campaigns.

REP. EWER asked **Mr. Kerwin** if he was certain this would include school districts, in reference to annual elections. School elections are handled in a separate section of the law and are under the jurisdiction of the Office of Public Instruction. **Mr. Kerwin** said the reason he was hesitant about what other elections this might include is because the statutes in Title 7 are confusing and it's difficult to know exactly what elections are included. A 50-page bill is forthcoming to fix some of these problems. Each election has its own rules and the laws for irrigation districts are different than conservation districts and have to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

REP. EWER asked **Mr. Kerwin** to submit something in writing about what the offices are so the committee knows what the effects might be. **Mr. Kerwin** responded that he would get the list for the committee before any further action is taken on this bill. (This was submitted by **Mr. Kerwin** on 1/19/95. **EXHIBIT 2**)

REP. JOHN BOHLINGER mentioned in the testimony provided by **REP. TREXLER** the cost of an election in his county is between \$6,000 and \$8,000. He responded that he did not say that elections in the counties have cost this much. **REP. BOHLINGER** said in the study of this issue, if **REP. TREXLER** has been able to inquire about the cost in other counties around the state. **REP. TREXLER** responded no.

Closing by Sponsor: The sponsor closed.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 103

Motion: **REP. HAGENER** MOVED THAT HB 103 DO PASS.

Discussion:

REP. ANDERSON questioned whether or not anything would be gained by this bill, and if the fines go through the district wouldn't they receive a similar reduction in the amount of money they are getting from other sources.

REP. EWER responded that he didn't feel this was a wash. The counties are not obligated to subsidize the district court. Most of the larger ones, such as Cascade County, do subsidize more than the six mills. This would earmark these fines to go back to the district court, an idea he supported because the district courts have historically been in difficult financial positions and the six mills allowed the class 1 areas have not been sufficient to cover expenses. Various methods have been used over the years, such as junk vehicle taxes, which are up for renewal at this time, so this would earmark some money into an area that historically has had problems. The extent to which they are using general fund money now, could very well be a wash.

REP. ANDERSON stated he subscribed to the idea that they should not have a lot of earmarked funds and the district courts that have been underfunded and have a hard time financing their efforts, nonetheless, should have to explain what they are spending their money on and account for their budget. There might be a conflict built into this where a district court really is self-serving by giving its fines to itself and this doesn't look good.

Motion/Vote: REP. HAGENER MOVED TO TABLE HB 103. The motion carried with REPS. EWER, DENNY, HAGENER, MCKEE, SHEA, and TROPILA voting no.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 115

Motion: REP. SHEA MOVED HB 115 DO PASS.

Discussion:

REP. DENNY stated his main question is in looking through Title 7 there are all sorts of inconsistencies and rules that do not make sense. Changing 10 days to 12 working days--10 days could be as little as six working days and up to eight working days and 12 working days could be a little more than two weeks and doesn't make sense. It should be 10 working days or 15 working days.

REP. BOHARSKI asked Mr. Morris if, instead of worrying about a company working a certain number of days, would it be more appropriate to follow some standardized accounting language and just say "in a timely fashion." Mr. Morris responded by saying this was a bill brought on behalf of the League of Cities and Towns. From his perspective, the interest he has in the bill would be limited to making sure that the notice to the county is given in sufficient time for the tax delinquencies to be reported by the county treasurer. The bill would give the city officials two more working days before they are currently, under law, required to provide that information. He would not suggest going with the language suggested by REP. BOHARSKI from the standpoint that it would leave it too open-ended from an accounting perspective; there is a necessity to get that information into

the courthouse in a timely fashion. The specification of days is preferred over something that would be open-ended.

Bart Campbell, Legislative Council, stated when drafting this bill he had conversations with county officials requesting this and the reason it is not 15 days is because the 10 days in regular days was too short to allow the city to get things done; 15 working days might make it too late for the county then to record their end of it on time, so 12 days would be in the middle and would be able to accomplish both things.

Motion: REP. MILLS called the question. REP. BRAINARD MADE A SUBSTITUTE MOTION TO AMEND THE BILL AS FOLLOWS: LINE 15 TO READ 10 WORKING DAYS INSTEAD OF 12, AN EVEN TWO WEEKS AND THE TITLE TO 10 WORKING DAYS.

Discussion:

REP. MILLS asked REP. BRAINARD to explain the virtue of his amendment. He responded going from 10 days to 12 working days, 10 working days which is two weeks would be sufficient. It cleans it up and makes it more comprehensible to the average person.

Vote: REP. MILLS called question. The motion to adopt the amendment carried 12-6 with REPS. ANDERSON, HAGENER, MCCULLOCH, MCKEE, MILLS and TROPILA voting no.

Motion: REP. MILLS MOVED HB 115 DO PASS AS AMENDED.

Discussion:

REP. ANDERSON stated the purpose of this bill was to move it from 10 to 12 days and asked if they have anything left in the bill that makes it worth passing.

REP. DENNY said they went from six to a maximum of eight days to ten, so they have gained four more working days.

Vote: The motion carried unanimously.

Other Business:

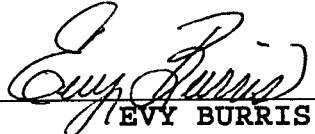
Dr. Kenneth L. Weaver, Director of Local Government Center, Montana State University, provided an executive summary of research results sponsored by the Montana Local Government Policy Council. **EXHIBIT 3** Dr. Weaver reviewed the executive summary on the local government policy council, local government center, research results, purpose, findings, conclusions and recommendations.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 4:05 p.m.



BILL BOHARSKI, Chairman



EVY BURRIS, Secretary

BB/eb

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Local Government

ROLL CALL

DATE 1-17-95

NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
Rep. Bill Boharski, Chairman	✓		
Rep. Jack Herron, Vice Chairman, Majority	✓		
Rep. David Ewer, Vice Chairman, Minority	✓		
Rep. Chris Ahner	✓		
Rep. Shiell Anderson	✓		
Rep. Ellen Bergman	✓		
Rep. John Bohlinger	✓		
Rep. Matt Brainard	✓		
Rep. Matt Denny	✓		
Rep. Rose Forbes	✓		
Rep. Toni Hagener	✓		
Rep. Bob Keenan	✓		
Rep. Linda McCulloch	✓		
Rep. Jeanette McKee	✓		
Rep. Norm Mills	✓		
Rep. Debbie Shea	✓		
Rep. Joe Tropila	✓		
Rep. Diana Wyatt	✓		



HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

January 18, 1995

Page 1 of 1

Mr. Speaker: We, the committee on Local Government report that House Bill 115 (first reading copy -- white) do pass as amended.

Signed: Wm E Boharski
Bill Boharski, Chair

And, that such amendments read:

1. Title, line 4.
Strike: "FROM"
Insert: "TO"
Strike: "DAYS TO 12"

2. Page 1, line 15.
Strike: "12"
Insert: "10"

-END-

Committee Vote:
Yes 11, No 0.

150730SC.Hdh

EXHIBIT 1DATE 1-17-95HB 154

DATE: January 17, 1995

TO: Betty Lou Kasten, Seat 66, House of Representatives

FROM: Nickolas C. Murnion, Garfield County Attorney, Box 375, Jordan, Montana; Telephone: 406-557-2480 -- Fax: 406-557-2595

On behalf of the Garfield County Health Center in Jordan, Montana we urge approval of House Bill 154. In 1994 a new 26-bed nursing home, medical assistance facility and clinic was built at a cost of \$900,000. The old facility had been built in 1950 and consisted of 18 beds. The facility not only did not meet current health facility building codes but was too small to be an economic unit. The intent of the project was to attempt to fill enough additional beds by building a new facility to substantially reduce the government subsidy that had historically been poured into the facility by Garfield County. The original plan was also to convert the old hospital facility to a courthouse to replace the Garfield County Courthouse which is a converted dance hall built in 1916. Historically the Health Center had needed a subsidy of in excess of \$200,000 per year with an average occupancy of 12 nursing home beds per year. Our projections showed that if the occupancy could rise to 18 beds per year, the subsidy could be reduced to approximately \$120,000. A mill in Garfield County raises \$5,500. This would allow us to reduce the burden on our taxpayers by at least 10 mills.

In 1990 and 1992 the voters approved exceeding the 10 mills allowed for health facilities by 21 mills for a total of 31 mills. At the June primary of 1994, which was just a few days before the new facility was to be opened, the voters voted down the additional 21 mills requested by the Garfield County Commissioners to operate the facility for the next 2 years. Reasons given included general dissatisfaction of government and with taxes, the only tax levy that gave the taxpayers an option to say no, didn't understand that it was not a tax increase, lack of information, etc. For whatever reason, the loss of the mill levy was potentially disastrous for Garfield County. Our only hope lay in filling more beds than originally were projected. This in fact has occurred. We currently have 23 beds filled. Garfield County also had some reserves that would enable it to survive for the fiscal year of 1994-1995. However unless the occupancy level continues at the current level, a deficiency will face the Garfield County Health Center in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1996. Even with the increased occupancy, there is a potential need to exceed the 10 mills by some amount.

Currently §7-6-2531 only allows one vote at the primary. There is no second chance to take the issue back to the voters under the statutes. This bill would allow us to do that. With an effective date immediately it would allow Garfield County to go to the voters in the school elections in the spring of this year with another ballot measure to exceed the 10 mill levy.

This bill would also help other counties who rely on the same source of funding for their health care. Carter County has funded its 20 bed nursing home in the same manner. I believe the voters approved a levy of 26 mills in

1994. Potentially Carter County could have the same problem we have in a future election.

All we seek in our support of this measure is a second chance to save our facility which has so greatly enhanced the quality of health care in Garfield County. As the utilization of the facility has increased also has the public support in Garfield County. All we ask of the Montana legislature is to give us the tools to decide our destiny in this very important and essential element - health care in Garfield County.

Nick Murnion
Garfield County Attorney

**SECRETARY OF STATE
STATE OF MONTANA**

EXHIBIT 2
DATE 1/17/95
HB 159



**Mike Cooney
Secretary of State**

**Montana State Capitol
PO Box 202801
Helena, MT 59620-2801**

To: House Local Government Committee
From: Joe Kerwin, Elections Bureau Chief
Re: House Bill 159
Date: January 18, 1995

At the request of the committee, this office has prepared a listing of those elections which House Bill 159 covers. Most of the districts which would be covered are in either Title 7 or 85 of the Montana Code Annotated. The Secretary of State has responsibility for Title 13 only and, therefore, this list is not necessarily a complete listing of all jurisdictions that might be affected by HB 159.

**School Districts
Local Port Authority Districts
Hospital Districts
Irrigation Districts
Drainage Districts
Cities Required to Hold Annual Elections
Fire Districts**

Additionally, subsection (4) should be amended so as to clarify that it would apply only to candidates for the above offices. As it is currently written, it would apply for any office, including state and federal positions.

If the intent is to deal with only a few specific types of elections, another possibility would be amend the specific sections of the laws dealing with that election. For instance, if the committee wished to change irrigation election laws, then amend the laws in Title 85, Chapter 7, Part 17. This would accomplish the goal while removing the chance that other elections might be affected unintentionally.

cc: Representative Cliff Trexler

63.210

EXHIBIT 3
DATE 1-17-95
HB n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF RESEARCH RESULTS
SPONSORED BY THE
MONTANA LOCAL GOVERNMENT POLICY COUNCIL

PREPARED FOR PRESENTATION TO THE
HOUSE AND SENATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEES
OF THE
FIFTY-FOURTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Representative Bill Boharski, Chairman
Senator Tom Beck, Chairman

by

Dr. Kenneth L. Weaver, Director
Local Government Center
Montana State University

January 17, 1995

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Local Government Policy Council:

The Local Government Policy Council was formed in 1989 to identify policy problems impacting county and municipal government and to sponsor applied research to assist state and local government in the resolution of those problems.

The research is coordinated by the Local Government Center at MSU-Bozeman and published in the semi-annual Montana Policy Review. The research is funded by a three year grant from the Northwest Area Foundation of Saint Paul, Minnesota.

No State appropriated dollars are used to support the Policy Council, nor do we ask for an appropriation.

The Policy Council is comprised of 16 members including two members drawn from the Local Government Committee in each House; four county and municipal government officials; the Director of the Department of Commerce; the State Coordinator of Indian Affairs; and two representatives from the private sector, who are currently, Mae Nan Ellingson and Dennis Burr. The Executive Directors of the League of Cities and Towns (Alec Hansen) and the Association of Counties (Gordon Morris) serve as ex-officio members, as does Newell Anderson, the Director of the Local Government Assistance Division of the Department of Commerce. The Director of the Local Government Center (Ken Weaver) serves as the Director of the Policy Council.

Local Government Center:

The Local Government Center is a Regents approved, outreach program within the Department of Political Science at MSU-Bozeman. Its purpose as set forth in statute (20-25-237, MCA) is to strengthen the capacities of Montana's county and municipal government by conducting research and providing training and on-site technical assistance directly to local officials. It also provides on-campus instruction in local government at the undergraduate and graduate level and publishes the Montana Policy Review twice each year.

The Local Government Center is funded primarily by grants and cost recovery fees for services.

The Local Government Center does not lobby nor does it advocate any public policy.

RESEARCH RESULTS

1. "Local Government Finance Since I-105", by Dr. Douglas J. Young.

Purpose:

The purpose of this research was to examine how local government dependence upon property taxes has changed since I-105 was adopted in 1986 and to examine any change in the property tax burden.

Findings:

- Both county and municipal spending have increased more slowly than either the rate of inflation or the increase in personal income since I-105 froze property taxes for local governments in 1986.
- Property taxes now comprise a smaller share of both county and municipal budgets than in 1986.
- Gaming revenues now comprise 15% of municipal general fund revenues. Counties receive much more modest amounts of gaming revenues.
- Other than taxes on natural resources, county property taxes rose more slowly than either the rate of inflation or the level of personal income since 1986.
- In the most populous fifth of Montana counties, inflation-adjusted, per capita property taxes declined 17 percent. In the smallest two-fifths of the counties per capita property taxes rose by 17-22 percent as a result of the loss of property tax revenue from natural resources and a decline in population.
- In 1987, property taxes funded about 55 percent of county budgets and had declined to 44 percent by 1993.
- Adjusting for inflation, the data suggest a marked deterioration in the financial position of counties.
- Municipal property tax burdens per capita increased on average only 8 percent since 1986, lagging well behind both inflation and increases in personal income.

Conclusions:

1. The precipitous decline in the value of natural resource production has severely squeezed the budgets of certain counties, shifting property tax burdens to other forms of taxable property.

2. The declining population trend of Eastern Montana spreads the property tax burden over a smaller tax base resulting in significantly higher per capita expenditures and property taxes. In some cases, citizens are paying substantially increased taxes on residences whose market value has actually declined.

3. Growth in population and property values in the western part of the state have not offset the effects of inflation. Here, the purchasing power of per capita mill values has declined by 20% or more, squeezing local government budgets. Despite upward reassessments of property values, per capita property tax burdens of county and municipal governments are increasing more slowly than either inflation or personal income.

4. The growth of gaming revenues now contributes very significantly to municipal budgets, much less so to county budget revenues.

2. "Indian Gaming in Montana" by Dr. Franke Wilmer.

Purpose:

The purpose of this research was to examine the history and current status of compact negotiations between Montana and the Indian Tribes under the Federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA).

Findings:

- Traditional gaming (Class I) and Bingo (Class II) do not require a state-tribal compact. Class III gaming on a reservation, which includes video poker and keno, does require the state and tribe to enter into a compact under the IGRA.
- Only two reservations now have compacts with the State of Montana:
 - Fort Peck and Crow both of which operate casinos offering video poker and keno.
 - The Northern Cheyenne and Rocky Boy Reservations have negotiated interim agreements.
 - The remaining three reservations have been involved in on-going legal battles with the state concerning the compact.
- The expansion of reservation gaming in Montana has a potential of generating 1529 jobs on the reservations and reducing public assistance funding in the amount of \$5,381,846 per year.

Recommendations:

1. The state should encourage local and tribal government leaders to cooperate in evaluating the adverse and beneficial impacts of expanded reservation gaming on the tribes and on the adjacent counties and communities.
2. The state should take the lead in improving state-tribal relations and make an effort to communicate regularly with tribal governments.
3. The state should recognize the mutual economic interdependence of tribal and local communities and promote tribal economic development through the infusion of new capital made possible by the expansion of tribal gaming.

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH PROJECTS COMPLETED OR IN PROGRESS

1. "Does the Treasure State Endowment Work?" by Dr. Richard Haines.
2. "Affordable Housing: Issues and Options for the State of Montana", by Eric Johnstone.
3. "Land and Economic Development: A Case for Moderation in Montana" by Gordon Meeks, Jr.
4. "Local Business and Quality of Life", by Dr. Jerry Johnson and Raymond Rasker.
5. "The Rocky Mountain Trade Corridor and NAFTA", by Moe Wosepka.
6. "The Montana Fiscal and Policy Crisis" by Dr. Doug Young, Dr. Ken Weaver and Judy Mathre.
7. "Montana Attitudes Toward Taxes and Government", by Dr. Ken Weaver and Dr. Nick Lovrich.
8. "Montana's Local Government Review Process" by Dr. Ken Weaver.
9. Continuing project to prune Title 7, MCA and to make it more user friendly for local officials.



Local Government Center
Local Government Policy Council
Local Government Policy Center

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Representative Bill Boharski
Chairman, House Local Government Committee
Montana State Legislature

January 12, 1994

Dear Chairman Boharski,

During the last two legislative sessions I have provided a summary briefing (15-20 minutes) to the House and to the Senate Local Government Committees to report the results of our research on issues of concern to local officials.

The research is sponsored by the Montana Local Government Policy Council which includes members from both the executive and legislative branches of State government, as well as elected local officials, the Directors of the League of Cities and the Association of Counties, and knowledgeable citizens. Representatives Wyatt and Bohlinger, of your Committee, presently serve on the Policy Council as does Newell Anderson of the Department of Commerce.

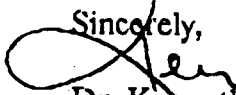
The work of the Policy Council is funded by private grants; it seeks no appropriation of public funds nor does it lobby. Its purpose is to sponsor objective research on issues of concern to local government and to make the results available to the Legislature, to local officials and to the public at large.

At the pleasure of each Chairman, I would be pleased and honored to update the two Committees on the work of the Policy Council and to brief the Members on our most recently completed local government research projects.

I would welcome the opportunity to brief the two Committees at their respective meeting times as early as next Tuesday, January 10 or any date convenient thereafter except for Thursday, January 19. Please contact me by phone or fax to set a date.

On behalf of the Policy Council, I wish you and your colleagues a productive and harmonious session.

Sincerely,


Dr. Kenneth L. Weaver
Director

c.c. Senator Tom Beck

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
VISITOR REGISTER

Local Government

COMMITTEE

BILL NO. HB 154, 159

DATE 1-17-95 SPONSOR(S) _____

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NAME AND ADDRESS	REPRESENTING	SUPPORT	OPPOSE
<u>Cliff Truher</u>			
<u>Gordon Morris</u>	<u>MACs.</u>	<u>HB154</u>	
<u>Bob Olsen</u>	<u>Montana Hospital Assoc</u>	<u>HB154</u>	
<u>KD BREWER</u>	<u>MACDC</u>	<u>HB159</u>	
<u>Nancy Sweeney</u>	<u>MACDC</u>	<u>HB159</u>	

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED TESTIMONY WITH SECRETARY. WITNESS STATEMENT FORMS
ARE AVAILABLE IF YOU CARE TO SUBMIT WRITTEN TESTIMONY.