1	House BILL NO. 449
2	INTRODUCED BY Juanson
3	BY REQUEST OF THE OFFICE OF BUDGET AND PROGRAM PLANNING AND THE STATE AUDITOR
4	
5	A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ALLOWING THE STATE AUDITOR TO COLLECT DELINQUENT
6	PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES USUALLY COLLECTED BY THE COUNTY TREASURER WHEN REQUESTED
7	TO DO SO; REQUIRING THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS TO NOTIFY A DELINQUENT
8	TAXPAYER OF ITS INTENTION TO REQUEST THE STATE AUDITOR TO COLLECT DELINQUENT TAXES;
9	AMENDING SECTIONS 15-16-119, 17-4-101, 17-4-102, 17-4-103, 17-4-105, AND 17-4-106, MCA; AND
10	PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."
11	
12	BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:
13	
14	Section 1. Section 17-4-101, MCA, is amended to read:
15	"17-4-101. Definitions Definition. In this part, the following definitions apply:
16	(1) The word-"department" means the department of revenue.
17	(2) The term " state agency" includes <u>:</u>
18	(1) all state offices, departments, divisions, boards, commissions, councils, committees,
19	institutions, university units, and other entities or instrumentalities of state government; and
20	(2) with respect to delinquent taxes that the state auditor is requested to collect, state and local
21	entities whose personal property taxes are collected by the county treasurer."
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23	Section 2. Section 17-4-102, MCA, is amended to read:
24	"17-4-102. Accounts of persons indebted to state. (1) In his discretion it is the duty of the <u>The</u>
25	state auditor to may:
26	(a) examine and settle the accounts of persons indebted to the state agencies and certify the
27	amount to the treasurer and, upon presentation and filing of the treasurer's receipt therefor for that amount,
28	to give such <u>the</u> person a discharge and charge the treasurer therewith <u>with that amount;</u>
29	(b) require any <u>a</u> person presenting an account for settlement to be sworn before him <u>the state</u>
30	auditor and to answer, orally or in writing, as to any facts relating to it the account.



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(2) The certificate mentioned referred to in subsection (1)(a) must show by whom the payment is 1 to be made, the amount thereof of the payment, and the fund into which it is to be paid and. Certificates 2 must be numbered in order, beginning with number 1 at the commencement of each fiscal year." 3 4 Section 3. Section 17-4-103, MCA, is amended to read: 5 "17-4-103. Collection of claims by state auditor. (1) (a) In his discretion, it is the duty of the The 6 state auditor to may examine the collection of money due the state an agency and institute suits: 7 (i) in its name for official delinquencies in relation to the assessment, collection, and payment of 8 9 the revenue; and (ii) against persons who possess public money or property and fail to pay over or deliver the money 10 11 or property; and 12 (iii) against debtors of the state agencies. 13 (b) The courts of the county where the seat of government may be located have jurisdiction, without regard to the residence of the defendants, over the collection suits authorized by this section. 14 15 (2) Whenever a person has money or other personal property that belongs to the state by escheat 16 or otherwise or has been entrusted with the collection, management, or disbursement of money, bonds, 17 or interest accruing from the money or bonds, belonging to or held in trust by the state, and fails to render 18 an account of the money or personal property to and make settlement with the state auditor within the time 19 prescribed by law or, when no particular time is specified, fails to render an account and make settlement 20 or who fails to pay into the state treasury the money belonging to the state, upon being required to do so 21 by the state auditor, within 20 days after the requisition, the state auditor shall state an account with that 22 person, charging 25% damages and interest at the rate of 10% a year from the time of the failure -A copy23 of the account in a suit is prima facie evidence of the things stated in the account, but when the state 24 auditor cannot for want of information state an account, he the state auditor may in an action brought by 25 him aver that fact and allege generally the amount of money or other property due or belonging to the state. 26 (3) (a) The state auditor may assist in the collection of a delinguent account owing to any state 27 an agency and may separately charge the state agency that transferred the debt for the cost of assistance. 28 The state auditor may designate the percentage of collected proceeds to be retained for the cost of 29 assistance. The cost of assistance for collecting personal property taxes that would otherwise be collected 30 by the county treasurer must be allocated in the same manner in which the taxes are distributed.



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1 (b) A delinguent personal property tax usually collected by the county treasurer may be collected 2 by the state auditor only on request of the board of county commissioners. The request must be 3 accompanied by proof of the amount of tax due and proof of the delinguency. The board shall also provide 4 proof that, at least 30 days before making the request, the county has notified the delinquent taxpayer by 5 mail of the board's intention to request assistance from the state auditor. 6 (4) The state auditor may provide a collection service for the general purpose of centralizing the 7 collection of all debts ewing owed to the state agencies." 8 9 Section 4. Section 17-4-105, MCA, is amended to read: 10 "17-4-105. Authority to collect debt -- offsets. (1) Once a debt of a state an agency has been transferred to the state auditor, the state auditor has the authority to collect it. The state auditor may 11 12 contract with commercial collection agencies agents for recovery of debts owed the state to agencies. (2) The state auditor shall, when appropriate, offset any amount due a state an agency from a 13 14 person or entity against any amount, including refunds or of taxes, owing the person or entity by any state 15 an agency., provided the The state auditor may not exercise this right of offset until the debtor has first been notified by the state auditor and been given an opportunity for a hearing. An offset may not be made 16 against any amount paid out as child support collected by the department of social and rehabilitation 17 18 services. The state auditor shall deduct from the claim and draw warrants for the amounts offset in favor of the respective state agencies to which the debt is due and for any balance in favor of the claimant. 19 Whenever insufficient to offset all amounts due state the agencies, the amount available must be applied 20 21 first to debts owed by reason of the nonpayment of child support and then in the manner as determined

22 appropriate by the state auditor, -in-the state auditor's discretion, determines.

(3) (a) The department state auditor retains the power to offset tax refunds due individuals against
taxes owed the state, provided the department agencies. The state auditor may not exercise this right of
offset until the taxpayer has been notified by the department state auditor and been given the opportunity
to request a review.

(b) Within 30 days following mailing of notification, the taxpayer may request a review of the
asserted liability. If a review is requested, the department state auditor shall conduct an informal review
conference, which is not subject to the contested case procedures of the Montana Administrative Procedure
Act. A request for a review pursuant to this subsection must be in writing and be delivered to the state



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1 auditor's office.

2 (c) Appeal from the decision of the department state auditor after the review conference may be
3 taken to the state tax appeal board.

4 (d) A taxpayer is not entitled to a review conference for a tax offset if the tax liability has been the
5 subject matter of any proceeding conducted for the purpose of determining its validity and any <u>a</u> decision
6 made as a result of that proceeding has become final.

7 (4) (a) A debt owed to the department of social and rehabilitation services or being collected by
8 the department of social and rehabilitation services on behalf of any person or agency may be offset by the
9 state auditor if the debt is being enforced or collected by the department of social and rehabilitation services
10 under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act.

(b) The debt need not be determined to be uncollectible as provided for in 17-4-104 before being
 transferred to the state auditor for offset. The debt must have accrued through written contract, court
 judgment, or administrative order.

(c) Within 30 days following the notification provided in subsection (2), the person owing a debt 14 15 described in subsection (4)(a) may request a hearing. The request must be in writing and be mailed to the department of social and rehabilitation services. The person owing a debt is not entitled to a hearing if the 16 amount of the debt has been the subject matter of any proceeding conducted for the purpose of 17 determining the validity of the debt and any a decision made as a result of that proceeding has become 18 19 final. The hearing must be conducted by teleconferencing methods and is subject to the provisions of the 20 Montana Administrative Procedure Act. The department of social and rehabilitation services shall adopt 21 rules necessary to determine governing the hearing procedures.

22 (5) If, in the discretion of the state auditor, the determines that a person or entity refuses or 23 neglects has refused or neglected to file a claim within a reasonable time, the head of the state agency 24 owing the amount shall file the claim on behalf of the person or entity; if. If the claim is approved by the 25 department of administration, it shall have has the same force and effect as though filed by the person or 26 entity. The amount due any person or entity from the state or any agency of the state is the net amount 27 otherwise owing the person or entity after any offset as provided in this section."

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Section 5. Section 17-4-106, MCA, is amended to read:

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"17-4-106. Agency owed debt to receive all money collected -- exception. (1) All money collected



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1 by the state auditor on debts transferred to him the state auditor by the various state agencies, except 2 funds collected under 17-4-103(3), must be deposited to the account or fund of the agency to which the 3 debt was originally owing owed. A county shall apply a delinguent personal property tax collection by the 4 state auditor to the payment of the taxpayer's most delinquent personal property taxes or portion thereof. 5 (2) Funds collected under 17-4-103(3) must be deposited in an account in the internal service fund 6 for the cost of assistance of debt collection by the state auditor. Funds deposited in excess of the amount 7 appropriated for operation of the debt collection program must be carried forward into the next fiscal year 8 for operation of the debt collection program. Any excess carried forward into the next fiscal year will must 9 be used to reduce the designated percentage of the collected proceeds charged to the various state 10 agencies. At the end of each biennium, any fund balance in excess of \$10,000 must be transferred back 11 to the general fund."

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Section 6. Section 15-16-119, MCA, is amended to read:

"15-16-119. Taxation of personal property -- duty of department <u>-- collection by state</u> auditor. (1) If the taxes on personal property are not a lien upon real property in the same county in an amount sufficient to secure the payment of the taxes, the department shall assess the property and compute the tax for the assessment. The department shall notify the county treasurer of the assessment and the amount of taxes due. To compute the taxes due on the personal property, the department shall use the appropriate mills levied during the previous year.

(2) The county treasurer shall notify the person against whom the tax is assessed and any other
 person having a properly perfected security interest of record of the amount and due date of the tax. The
 tax is due and payable 30 days from the date the treasurer mails the notice. Taxes not paid within 30 days
 become delinquent, and the penalty and interest provisions of 15-16-101 must be applied.

(3) The county treasurer shall, after the tax becomes delinquent, levy upon and take into possession the personal property against which a tax is assessed or any other personal property in the hands of the delinquent taxpayer. The county treasurer may proceed to sell the property in the same manner as property is sold on execution by the sheriff.

(4) The county treasurer shall, for the purpose of making the levy and sale, direct the sheriff to
make the levy and sale. The sheriff, undersheriff, or any deputy sheriff of the county is ex officio a deputy
county treasurer for sale purposes and may receive payment of the taxes, penalty, and interest. The sheriff



- 5 -

1 may receive the same fees as for making a seizure and sale as provided in 15-17-911.

(5) The county treasurer and the treasurer's sureties are liable on the treasurer's official bond for
all taxes on personal property remaining uncollected by reason of the willful failure and neglect of the
treasurer to levy upon and sell the personal property for the taxes levied upon the property, including
penalty and interest.

6 (6) Failure by the sheriff, undersheriff, or deputy sheriff acting as a deputy county treasurer to 7 make the levy and sale results in a levy against the official bond of the sheriff, undersheriff, or deputy 8 sheriff for payment of the delinquent tax, including penalty and interest.

9 (7) The county treasurer shall give the board of county commissioners a list of delinquent personal
 10 property taxpayers and the taxes due. The board may order the county treasurer to verify the list under
 11 oath and to send a copy of the list to the state auditor for collection under Title 17, chapter 4, part 1.

12 (7)(8) The provisions of this section do not apply to property for which delinquent property taxes
 13 have been suspended or canceled under the provisions of Title 15, chapter 24, part 17."

-END-

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15 <u>NEW SECTION.</u> Section 7. Effective date. [This act] is effective July 1, 1995.

16



STATE OF MONTANA - FISCAL NOTE

Fiscal Note for HB0449, as introduced

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION:

A bill allowing the State Auditor's Office to collect delinquent personal property taxes usually collected by the county treasurer when requested to do so by the county.

ASSUMPTIONS :

FISCAL IMPACT:

- 1. Counties are not mandated to use the collection service. Debts are not transferred to the state, but remain with the county. If collection of debts is made by the county through traditional collection processes, the state is not compensated for these collections.
- 2. The proposed legislation allows for partial payment by debtors. Distribution of collections will be based on the same distribution that regular taxes are allocated.
- 3. On average, 40% of personal property taxes collected fund public school equalization and the six-mill university levy accounts. This has a direct general fund impact.
- 4. The State Auditor's Office will need to convince counties that the service is a benefit to them, assist counties in determining if collection service makes sense for each particular county, and to determine individual county data processing needs for data sharing. The estimated proprietary fund operating expenses, as shown in a new proposal in the Governor's Executive Budget, are \$9,977 in FY96 and \$9,626 in FY97. Expense categories include data processing services, supplies, communications, and travel.
- 5. Current statewide personal property taxable value is \$304,309,998. The average statewide mill levy tax rate is .362467 of the taxable value. Statewide total personal property taxes equal \$110,302,332.
- 6. Lewis and Clark County represents 7% of the personal property tax base in the state. Delinquent personal property taxes statewide will, on average, approximate the experience in Lewis and Clark County.
- 7. There will be limited participation by counties until the program proves itself to county officials. Initially, 14% of the debt owed will be submitted to the debt collection process. In the second year, FY97, this will grow to 25% of total personal property debt. Total referred debt will be \$1,323,730 in FY96 and \$2,363,804 in FY97.
- 8. The state debt collection effort has a five percent success rate in collecting debts that are referred to the program. Collections for counties will be \$66,186 in FY96 and \$118,190 in FY97.

Revenues:	FY96	FY97
	Difference	Difference
General Fund (01)	. 24,489	43,730

EFFECT ON COUNTY OR OTHER LOCAL REVENUES OR EXPENDITURES:

Increased revenue to local governments will be approximately 60% of the funds collected. The remaining 40% will be for school equalization and university six mill levy funding. The 60% estimate is \$36,733 in FY96 and \$65,595 in FY97. (continued)

DAVID LEWIS, BUDGET DIRECTOR DATE Office of Budget and Program Planning

EMILY SWANSON, PRIMARY SPONSOR Fiscal Note for HB449, as introduced HB

Fiscal Note Request, <u>HB0449</u>, <u>as introduced</u> Page 2 (continued)

LONG-RANGE EFFECTS OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION:

Based on total estimated personal property delinquencies (\$9.4 million) and the bad debt collection program's historical success rate, potential collections could climb into the hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. This is dependent upon the degree of success with these debts and the counties' acceptance of the program.

TECHNICAL NOTES:

The bill takes away the Department of Revenue's authority, under 17-4-105 (3), MCA to offset tax refunds due individuals against taxes owed the state by deleting the Department of Revenue from the definition in 17-4-101, MCA, and by putting the State Auditor in its place in 17-4-105 (3), MCA. This means the Department of Revenue would no longer be able to offset, from individual income tax refunds, taxes owed the state from sources other than individual income tax. This would result in some fund shifting and possible loss of revenue.

There is some question as to whether or not the Department of Revenue would retain its power to offset individual income tax refunds for individual income taxes owed the state as is authorized under 15-30-310, MCA. If the Department of Revenue does not retain the power to offset tax refunds as is authorized under 15-30-310, MCA, there would be some fund shifting for the revenue currently being offset.

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24	"17-4-102. Accounts of persons indebted to state. (1) In his discretion it is the duty of the The
25	state auditor to <u>may</u> :
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27	amount to the treasurer and, upon presentation and filing of the treasurer's receipt therefor for that amount,
28	to give such the person a discharge and charge the treasurer therewith with that amount;
29	(b) require any a person presenting an account for settlement to be sworn before him the state
30	auditor and to answer, orally or in writing, as to any facts relating to it the account.



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(2) The certificate mentioned referred to in subsection (1)(a) must show by whom the payment is 1 to be made, the amount thereof of the payment, and the fund into which it is to be paid and. Certificates 2 must be numbered in order, beginning with number 1 at the commencement of each fiscal year." 3 4 Section 3. Section 17-4-103, MCA, is amended to read: 5 "17-4-103. Collection of claims by state auditor. (1) (a) In his discretion, it is the duty of the The 6 state auditor to may examine the collection of money due the state an agency and institute suits: 7 (i) in its name for official delinquencies in relation to the assessment, collection, and payment of 8 9 the revenue; and (ii) against persons who possess public money or property and fail to pay over or deliver the money 10 11 or property; and (iii) against debtors of the state agencies. 12 (b) The courts of the county where the seat of government may be located have jurisdiction, 13 14 without regard to the residence of the defendants, over the collection suits authorized by this section. (2) Whenever a person has money or other personal property that belongs to the state by escheat 15 16 or otherwise or has been entrusted with the collection, management, or disbursement of money, bonds, 17 or interest accruing from the money or bonds, belonging to or held in trust by the state, and fails to render an account of the money or personal property to and make settlement with the state auditor within the time 18 19 prescribed by law or, when no particular time is specified, fails to render an account and make settlement 20 or who fails to pay into the state treasury the money belonging to the state, upon being required to do so 21 by the state auditor, within 20 days after the requisition, the state auditor shall state an account with that 22 person, charging 25% damages and interest at the rate of 10% a year from the time of the failure. A copy 23 of the account in a suit is prima facie evidence of the things stated in the account, but when the state 24 auditor cannot for want of information state an account, he the state auditor may in an action brought by 25 him aver that fact and allege generally the amount of money or other property due or belonging to the state. 26 (3) (a) The state auditor may assist in the collection of a delinquent account owing to any state 27 an agency and may separately charge the state agency that transferred the debt for the cost of assistance. 28 The state auditor may designate the percentage of collected proceeds to be retained for the cost of 29 assistance. The cost of assistance for collecting personal property taxes that would otherwise be collected 30 by the county treasurer must be allocated in the same manner in which the taxes are distributed.



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1 (b) A delinquent personal property tax usually collected by the county treasurer may be collected 2 by the state auditor only on request of the board of county commissioners. The request must be 3 accompanied by proof of the amount of tax due and proof of the delinguency. The board shall also provide 4 proof that, at least 30 days before making the request, the county has notified the delinguent taxpayer by 5 mail of the board's intention to request assistance from the state auditor. 6 (4) The state auditor may provide a collection service for the general purpose of centralizing the 7 collection of all debts owing owed to the state agencies." 8 9 Section 4. Section 17-4-105, MCA, is amended to read: 10 "17-4-105. Authority to collect debt -- offsets. (1) Once a debt of a state an agency has been 11 transferred to the state auditor, the state auditor has the authority to collect it. The state auditor may 12 contract with commercial collection agencies agents for recovery of debts owed the state to agencies. 13 (2) The state auditor shall, when appropriate, offset any amount due a state an agency from a person or entity against any amount, including retunds or of taxes, owing the person or entity by any state 14 an agency., provided the The state auditor may not exercise this right of offset until the debtor has first 15 16 been notified by the state auditor and becomings an opportunity for a hearing. An offset may not be made

17 against any amount paid out as child support collected by the department of social and rehabilitation 18 services. The state auditor shall deduct from the claim and draw warrants for the amounts offset in favor 19 of the respective state agencies to which <u>the debt is</u> due and for any balance in favor of the claimant. 20 Whenever insufficient to offset all amounts due state <u>the</u> agencies, the amount available must be applied 21 first to debts owed by reason of the nonpayment of child support and then in the manner as <u>determined</u> 22 appropriate by the state auditor, in the state auditor's discretion, determines.

(3) (a) The department state auditor DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE retains the power to offset tax
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 <u>THE STATE. THE DEPARTMENT</u> may not exercise this right of offset until the taxpayer has been notified
 by the department state auditor DEPARTMENT and been given the opportunity to request a review.

(b) Within 30 days following mailing of notification, the taxpayer may request a review of the
asserted liability. If a review is requested, the department <u>state auditor</u> <u>DEPARTMENT</u> shall conduct an
informal review conference, which is not subject to the contested case procedures of the Montana
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Section 5. Section 17-4-106, MCA, is amended to read:

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"17-4-106. Agency owed debt to receive all money collected -- exception. (1) All money collected



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(2) The county treasurer shall notify the person against whom the tax is assessed and any other
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(3) The county treasurer shall, after the tax becomes delinquent, <u>EITHER PROCEED UNDER</u>
 <u>SUBSECTION (7) OR</u> levy upon and take into possession the personal property against which a tax is
 assessed or any other personal property in the hands of the delinquent taxpayer. The county treasurer may
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1 may receive the same fees as for making a seizure and sale as provided in 15-17-911. 2 (5) The county treasurer and the treasurer's sureties are liable on the treasurer's official bond for 3 all taxes on personal property remaining uncollected by reason of the willful failure and neglect of the 4 treasurer to levy upon and sell the personal property for the taxes levied upon the property, including 5 penalty and interest. 6 (6) Failure by the sheriff, undersheriff, or deputy sheriff acting as a deputy county treasurer to 7 make the levy and sale results in a levy against the official bond of the sheriff, undersheriff, or deputy 8 sheriff for payment of the delinquent tax, including penalty and interest. 9 (7) The county treasurer shall give the board of county commissioners a list of delinquent personal property taxpayers and the taxes due. The board may order the county treasurer to verify the list under 10 oath and to send a copy of the list to the state auditor for collection under Title 17, chapter 4, part 1. 11 12 (7)(8) The provisions of this section do not apply to property for which delinquent property taxes 13 have been suspended or canceled under the provisions of Title 15, chapter 24, part 17." 14 15 NEW SECTION. Section 7. Effective date. [This act] is effective July 1, 1995. -END-16



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14	Section 1. Section 17-4-101, MCA, is amended to read:
15	"17-4-101. Definitions Definition. In this part, the following definitions apply:
16	(1) The word "department" means the department of revenue.
17	(2) The term " state agency" includes:
18	(1) all state offices, departments, divisions, boards, commissions, councils, committees,
19	institutions, university units, and other entities or instrumentalities of state government; and
20	(2) with respect to delinguent taxes that the state auditor is requested to collect, state and local
21	entities whose personal property taxes are collected by the county treasurer."
22	
23	Section 2. Section 17-4-102, MCA, is amended to read:
24	"17-4-102. Accounts of persons indebted to state. (1) In his discretion it is the duty of the The
25	state auditor to <u>may</u> :
26	(a) examine and settle the accounts of persons indebted to the state agencies and certify the
27	amount to the treasurer and, upon presentation and filing of the treasurer's receipt therefor for that amount,
28	to give such the person a discharge and charge the treasurer therewith with that amount;
29	(b) require any a person presenting an account for settlement to be sworn before him the state
30	auditor and to answer, orally or in writing, as to any facts relating to it the account.



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(2) The certificate mentioned referred to in subsection (1)(a) must show by whom the payment is
 to be made, the amount thereof of the payment, and the fund into which it is to be paid and. Certificates
 must be numbered in order, beginning with number 1 at the commencement of each fiscal year."

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Section 3. Section 17-4-103, MCA, is amended to read:

6 **"17-4-103. Collection of claims by state auditor.** (1) (a) In his discretion, it is the duty of the The 7 state auditor to may examine the collection of money due the state an agency and institute suits:

8 (i) in its name for official delinquencies in relation to the assessment, collection, and payment of 9 the revenue; and

(ii) against persons who possess public money or property and fail to pay over or deliver the money
 or property; and

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(iii) against debtors of the state agencies.

13 (b) The courts of the county where the seat of government may be located have jurisdiction, 14 without regard to the residence of the defendants, over the collection suits authorized by this section.

(2) Whenever a person has money or other personal property that belongs to the state by escheat 15 or otherwise or has been entrusted with the collection, management, or disbursement of money, bonds, 16 17 or interest accruing from the money or bonds, belonging to or held in trust by the state, and fails to render an account of the money or personal property to and make settlement with the state auditor within the time 18 prescribed by law or, when no particular time is specified, fails to render an account and make settlement 19 or whe fails to pay into the state treasury the money belonging to the state, upon being required to do so 20 by the state auditor, within 20 days after the requisition, the state auditor shall state an account with that 21 person, charging 25% damages and interest at the rate of 10% a year from the time of the failure. A copy 22 23 of the account in a suit is prima facie evidence of the things stated in the account, but when the state 24 auditor cannot for want of information state an account, he the state auditor may in an action brought by him aver that fact and allege generally the amount of money or other property due or belonging to the state. 25

(3) (a) The state auditor may assist in the collection of a delinquent account owing to any state
an agency and may separately charge the state agency that transferred the debt for the cost of assistance.
The state auditor may designate the percentage of collected proceeds to be retained for the cost of
assistance. The cost of assistance for collecting personal property taxes that would otherwise be collected
by the county treasurer must be allocated in the same manner in which the taxes are distributed.



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1 (b) A delinquent personal property tax usually collected by the county treasurer may be collected 2 by the state auditor only on request of the board of county commissioners. The request must be 3 accompanied by proof of the amount of tax due and proof of the delinquency. The board shall also provide 4 proof that, at least 30 days before making the request, the county has notified the delinquent taxpayer by 5 mail of the board's intention to request assistance from the state auditor.

6 (4) The state auditor may provide a collection service for the general purpose of centralizing the
7 collection of all debts owing owed to the state agencies."

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Section 4. Section 17-4-105, MCA, is amended to read:

10 "17-4-105. Authority to collect debt -- offsets. (1) Once a debt of a-state an agency has been
 11 transferred to the state auditor, the state auditor has the authority to collect it. The state auditor may
 12 contract with commercial collection agencies agents for recovery of debts owed the state to agencies.

13 (2) The state auditor shall, when appropriate, offset any amount due a state an agency from a 14 person or entity against any amount, including refunds or of taxes, owing the person or entity by any state an agency., provided the The state auditor may not exercise this right of offset until the debtor has first 15 been notified by the state auditor and been given an opportunity for a hearing. An offset may not be made 16 17 against any amount paid out as child support collected by the department of social and rehabilitation 18 services. The state auditor shall deduct from the claim and draw warrants for the amounts offset in favor of the respective state agencies to which the debt is due and for any balance in favor of the claimant. 19 20 Whenever insufficient to offset all amounts due state the agencies, the amount available must be applied 21 first to debts owed by reason of the nonpayment of child support and then in the manner as determined appropriate by the state auditor, in the state auditor's discretion, determines. 22

(3) (a) The department <u>state auditor</u> <u>DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE</u> retains the power to offset tax
 refunds due individuals against taxes owed the state, provided the department <u>agencies. The state auditor</u>
 <u>THE STATE. THE DEPARTMENT</u> may not exercise this right of offset until the taxpayer has been notified
 by the <u>department <u>state-auditor</u> <u>DEPARTMENT</u> and been given the opportunity to request a review.
</u>

(b) Within 30 days following mailing of notification, the taxpayer may request a review of the
 asserted liability. If a review is requested, the dopartment <u>state auditor</u> <u>DEPARTMENT</u> shall conduct an
 informal review conference, which is not subject to the contested case procedures of the Montana
 Administrative Procedure Act. <u>A-request for a review pursuant to this subsection must be in writing and</u>



1 be delivered to the state auditor's office.

2 (c) Appeal from the decision of the department <u>state auditor</u> <u>DEPARTMENT</u> after the review
 3 conference may be taken to the state tax appeal board.

4 (d) A taxpayer is not entitled to a review conference for a tax offset if the tax liability has been the
5 subject matter of any proceeding conducted for the purpose of determining its validity and any a decision
6 made as a result of that proceeding has become final.

7 (4) (a) A debt owed to the department of social and rehabilitation services or being collected by
8 the department of social and rehabilitation services on behalf of any person or agency may be offset by the
9 state auditor if the debt is being enforced or collected by the department of social and rehabilitation services
10 under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act.

(b) The debt need not be determined to be uncollectible as provided for in 17-4-104 before being
 transferred to the state auditor for offset. The debt must have accrued through written contract, court
 judgment, or administrative order.

14 (c) Within 30 days following the notification provided in subsection (2), the person owing a debt 15 described in subsection (4)(a) may request a hearing. The request must be in writing and be mailed to the 16 department of social and rehabilitation services STATE AUDITOR. The person owing a debt is not entitled 17 to a hearing if the amount of the debt has been the subject matter of any proceeding conducted for the 18 purpose of determining the validity of the debt and any a decision made as a result of that proceeding has 19 become final. The hearing must be conducted by teleconferencing methods and is subject to the provisions 20 of the Montana Administrative Procedure Act. The department of social and rehabilitation services shall 21 adopt rules necessary to determine governing the hearing procedures.

(5) If, in the discretion of the state auditor, the determines that a person or entity refuses or neglects has refused or neglected to file a claim within a reasonable time, the head of the state agency owing the amount shall file the claim on behalf of the person or entity; if, If the claim is approved by the department of administration, it shall have has the same force and effect as though filed by the person or entity. The amount due any person or entity from the state or any agency of the state is the net amount otherwise owing the person or entity after any offset as provided in this section."

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Section 5. Section 17-4-106, MCA, is amended to read:



- 4 -

"17-4-106. Agency owed debt to receive all money collected -- exception. (1) All money collected

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1 by the state auditor on debts transferred to him the state auditor by the various state agencies, except 2 funds collected under 17-4-103(3), must be deposited to the account or fund of the agency to which the 3 debt was originally owing owed. A county shall apply a delinquent personal property tax collection by the 4 state auditor to the payment of the taxpayer's most delinguent personal property taxes or portion thereof. 5 (2) Funds collected under 17-4-103(3) must be deposited in an account in the internal service fund 6 for the cost of assistance of debt collection by the state auditor. Funds deposited in excess of the amount 7 appropriated for operation of the debt collection program must be carried forward into the next fiscal year 8 for operation of the debt collection program. Any excess carried forward into the next fiscal year will must 9 be used to reduce the designated percentage of the collected proceeds charged to the various state 10 agencies. At the end of each biennium, any fund balance in excess of \$10,000 must be transferred back 11 to the general fund."

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Section 6. Section 15-16-119, MCA, is amended to read:

14 "15-16-119. Taxation of personal property -- duty of department -- collection by state 15 <u>auditor</u>. (1) If the taxes on personal property are not a lien upon real property in the same county in an 16 amount sufficient to secure the payment of the taxes, the department shall assess the property and 17 compute the tax for the assessment. The department shall notify the county treasurer of the assessment 18 and the amount of taxes due. To compute the taxes due on the personal property, the department shall 19 use the appropriate mills levied during the previous year.

(2) The county treasurer shall notify the person against whom the tax is assessed and any other
person having a properly perfected security interest of record of the amount and due date of the tax. The
tax is due and payable 30 days from the date the treasurer mails the notice. Taxes not paid within 30 days
become delinquent, and the penalty and interest provisions of 15-16-101 must be applied.

(3) The county treasurer shall, after the tax becomes delinquent, <u>EITHER PROCEED UNDER</u>
 <u>SUBSECTION (7) OR</u> levy upon and take into possession the personal property against which a tax is
 assessed or any other personal property in the hands of the delinquent taxpayer. The county treasurer may
 proceed to sell the property in the same manner as property is sold on execution by the sheriff.

(4) The county treasurer shall, for the purpose of making the levy and sale, direct the sheriff to
 make the levy and sale. The sheriff, undersheriff, or any deputy sheriff of the county is ex officio a deputy
 county treasurer for sale purposes and may receive payment of the taxes, penalty, and interest. The sheriff

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1 may receive the same fees as for making a seizure and sale as provided in 15-17-911.

2 (5) The county treasurer and the treasurer's sureties are liable on the treasurer's official bond for 3 all taxes on personal property remaining uncollected by reason of the willful failure and neglect of the 4 treasurer to levy upon and sell the personal property for the taxes levied upon the property, including 5 penalty and interest.

6 (6) Failure by the sheriff, undersheriff, or deputy sheriff acting as a deputy county treasurer to 7 make the levy and sale results in a levy against the official bond of the sheriff, undersheriff, or deputy 8 sheriff for payment of the delinquent tax, including penalty and interest.

9 (7) The county treasurer shall give the board of county commissioners a list of delinquent personal
 10 property taxpayers and the taxes due. The board may order the county treasurer to verify the list under
 11 oath and to send a copy of the list to the state auditor for collection under Title 17, chapter 4, part 1.

12 (7)(8) The provisions of this section do not apply to property for which delinquent property taxes

NEW SECTION. Section 7. Effective date. [This act] is effective July 1, 1995.

13 have been suspended or canceled under the provisions of Title 15, chapter 24, part 17."

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-END-

Montana Legislative Council

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Page 1 of 1 April 6, 1995

MR. PRESIDENT:

We, your committee on Taxation having had under consideration HB 449 (third reading copy -- blue), respectfully report that HB 449 be amended as follows and as so amended be congurred in.

Signed: Gerry Devlin, Chair Senator

That such amendments read:

1. Page 6, line 14. Insert: "

<u>NEW SECTION.</u> Section 7. Coordination instructions. (1)If [this act] and House Bill No. 563 are both passed and approved, then:

(a) the definition of department in [section 11] of House Bill No. 563 is effective and the striking of the definition in [section 1 of this act] is void;

(b) the references to "state auditor" in 17-4-103, 17-4-105, and 17-4-106 of [this act] are changed to "department"; and

(c) references to "state auditor" in 39-51-3207 of House Bill No. 563 are changed to "department of administration".

(2) If [this act] and House Bill No. 36 are both passed and approved, then the references to "state auditor" in 53-1-411 are changed to "department of administration"." Renumber: subsequent section

-END-

.md. Coord. Sec. of Senate

Senator Carrying Bi

HB 449 SENATE 791023SC.SPV

HB 449 REFERENCE BILL

AS AMENDED

1	HOUSE BILL NO. 449
2	INTRODUCED BY SWANSON
3	BY REQUEST OF THE OFFICE OF BUDGET AND PROGRAM PLANNING AND THE STATE AUDITOR
4	
5	A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ALLOWING THE STATE AUDITOR TO COLLECT DELINQUENT
6	PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES USUALLY COLLECTED BY THE COUNTY TREASURER WHEN REQUESTED
7	TO DO SO; REQUIRING THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS TO NOTIFY A DELINQUENT
8	TAXPAYER OF ITS INTENTION TO REQUEST THE STATE AUDITOR TO COLLECT DELINQUENT TAXES;
9	AMENDING SECTIONS 15-16-119, 17-4-101, 17-4-102, 17-4-103, 17-4-105, AND 17-4-106, MCA; AND
10	PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."
11	
12	BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:
13	
14	Section 1. Section 17-4-101, MCA, is amended to read:
15	"17-4-101. Definitions Definition. In this part, the following definitions apply:
16	(1) The word "dopartment" means the department of revenue.
17	(2)- The term " state agency" includes <u>:</u>
18	(1) all state offices, departments, divisions, boards, commissions, councils, committees,
19	institutions, university units, and other entities or instrumentalities of state government; and
20	(2) with respect to delinguent taxes that the state auditor is requested to collect, state and local
21	entities whose personal property taxes are collected by the county treasurer."
22	
23	Section 2. Section 17-4-102, MCA, is amended to read:
24	"17-4-102. Accounts of persons indebted to state. (1) In his discretion it is the duty of the The
25	state auditor to <u>may</u> :
26	(a) examine and settle the accounts of persons indebted to the state agencies and certify the
27	amount to the treasurer and, upon presentation and filing of the treasurer's receipt therefor for that amount,
28	to give such the person a discharge and charge the treasurer therewith with that amount;
2 9	(b) require any a person presenting an account for settlement to be sworn before him the state
30	auditor and to answer, orally or in writing, as to any facts relating to it the account.

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(2) The certificate mentioned referred to in subsection (1)(a) must show by whom the payment is 1 to be made, the amount thereof of the payment, and the fund into which it is to be paid and. Certificates 2 must be numbered in order, beginning with number 1 at the commencement of each fiscal year." 3 4 Section 3. Section 17-4-103, MCA, is amended to read: 5 "17-4-103. Collection of claims by state auditor. (1) (a) In his discretion, it is the duty of the The 6 state auditor to may examine the collection of money due the state an agency and institute suits: 7 (i) in its name for official delinquencies in relation to the assessment, collection, and payment of 8 9 the revenue; and 10 (ii) against persons who possess public money or property and fail to pay over or deliver the money 11 or property; and 12 (iii) against debtors of the state agencies. (b) The courts of the county where the seat of government may be located have jurisdiction, 13 without regard to the residence of the defendants, over the collection suits authorized by this section. 14 (2) Whenever a person has money or other personal property that belongs to the state by escheat 15 16 or otherwise or has been entrusted with the collection, management, or disbursement of money, bonds, 17 or interest accruing from the money or bonds, belonging to or held in trust by the state, and fails to render 18 an account of the money or personal property to and make settlement with the state auditor within the time prescribed by law or, when no particular time is specified, fails to render an account and make settlement 19 20 or who fails to pay into the state treasury the money belonging to the state, upon being required to do so 21 by the state auditor, within 20 days after the requisition, the state auditor shall state an account with that 22 person, charging 25% damages and interest at the rate of 10% a year from the time of the failure. A copy 23 of the account in a suit is prima facie evidence of the things stated in the account, but when the state auditor cannot for want of information state an account, he the state auditor may in an action brought by 24 25 him aver that fact and allege generally the amount of money or other property due or belonging to the state. 26 (3) (a) The state auditor may assist in the collection of a delinquent account owing to any state 27 an agency and may separately charge the state agency that transferred the debt for the cost of assistance. 28 The state auditor may designate the percentage of collected proceeds to be retained for the cost of 29 assistance. The cost of assistance for collecting personal property taxes that would otherwise be collected 30 by the county treasurer must be allocated in the same manner in which the taxes are distributed.



- 2 -

1	(b) A delinquent personal property tax usually collected by the county treasurer may be collected
2	by the state auditor only on request of the board of county commissioners. The request must be
3	accompanied by proof of the amount of tax due and proof of the delinguency. The board shall also provide
4	proof that, at least 30 days before making the request, the county has notified the delinguent taxpayer by
5	mail of the board's intention to request assistance from the state auditor.
6	(4) The state auditor may provide a collection service for the general purpose of centralizing the
7	collection of all debts owing owed to the state agencies."
8	
9	Section 4. Section 17-4-105, MCA, is amended to read:
10	"17-4-105. Authority to collect debt offsets. (1) Once a debt of a state <u>an</u> agency has been
11	transferred to the state auditor, the state auditor has the authority to collect it. The state auditor may
12	contract with commercial collection agencies agents for recovery of debts owed the state to agencies.
13	(2) The state auditor shall <u>, when appropriate,</u> offset any amount due a state <u>an</u> agency from a
14	person or entity against any amount, including refunds or <u>of</u> taxes, owing the person or entity by any state
15	an agency. , provided the The state auditor may not exercise this right of offset until the debtor has first
16	been notified by the state auditor and been given an opportunity for a hearing. An offset may not be made
17	against any amount paid out as child support collected by the department of social and rehabilitation
18	services. The state auditor shall deduct from the claim and draw warrants for the amounts offset in favor
19	of the respective state agencies to which the debt is due and for any balance in favor of the claimant.
20	Whenever insufficient to offset all amounts due state the agencies, the amount available must be applied
21	first to debts owed by reason of the nonpayment of child support and then in the manner as determined
22	appropriate by the state auditor , in the state auditor's discretion, determines .
23	(3) (a) The department state auditor <u>DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE</u> retains the power to offset tax
24	refunds due individuals against taxes owed the state, provided the department agencies. The state auditor
25	THE STATE. THE DEPARTMENT may not exercise this right of offset until the taxpayer has been notified
26	by the department <u>state auditor</u> DEPARTMENT and been given the opportunity to request a review.
27	(b) Within 30 days following mailing of notification, the taxpayer may request a review of the
28	asserted liability. If a review is requested, the department state auditor DEPARTMENT shall conduct an
29	informal review conference, which is not subject to the contested case procedures of the Montana
30	Administrative Procedure Act. <u>A request for a review pursuant to this subsection must be in writing and</u>

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be delivered to the state auditor's office.

2 (c) Appeal from the decision of the department <u>state auditor</u> <u>DEPARTMENT</u> after the review
3 conference may be taken to the state tax appeal board.

4 (d) A taxpayer is not entitled to a review conference for a tax offset if the tax liability has been the
5 subject matter of any proceeding conducted for the purpose of determining its validity and any <u>a</u> decision
6 made as a result of that proceeding has become final.

7 (4) (a) A debt owed to the department of social and rehabilitation services or being collected by 8 the department of social and rehabilitation services on behalf of any person or agency may be offset by the 9 state auditor if the debt is being enforced or collected by the department of social and rehabilitation services 10 under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act.

(b) The debt need not be determined to be uncollectible as provided for in 17-4-104 before being
transferred to the state auditor for offset. The debt must have accrued through written contract, court
judgment, or administrative order.

14 (c) Within 30 days following the notification provided in subsection (2), the person owing a debt 15 described in subsection (4)(a) may request a hearing. The request must be in writing and be mailed to the department of social and rehabilitation services STATE AUDITOR. The person owing a debt is not entitled 16 17 to a hearing if the amount of the debt has been the subject matter of any proceeding conducted for the 18 purpose of determining the validity of the debt and any a decision made as a result of that proceeding has become final. The hearing must be conducted by teleconferencing methods and is subject to the provisions 19 20 of the Montana Administrative Procedure Act. The department of social and rehabilitation services shall 21 adopt rules necessary to determine governing the hearing procedures.

(5) If, in the discretion of the state auditor, the determines that a person or entity refuses or neglects has refused or neglected to file a claim within a reasonable time, the head of the state agency owing the amount shall file the claim on behalf of the person or entity; if, If the claim is approved by the department of administration, it shall have has the same force and effect as though filed by the person or entity. The amount due any person or entity from the state or any agency of the state is the net amount otherwise owing the person or entity after any offset as provided in this section."

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Section 5. Section 17-4-106, MCA, is amended to read:

"17-4-106. Agency owed debt to receive all money collected -- exception. (1) All money collected



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1 by the state auditor on debts transferred to him the state auditor by the various state agencies, except 2 funds collected under 17-4-103(3), must be deposited to the account or fund of the agency to which the 3 debt was originally owing owed. A county shall apply a delinguent personal property tax collection by the 4 state auditor to the payment of the taxpayer's most delinguent personal property taxes or portion thereof. 5 (2) Funds collected under 17-4-103(3) must be deposited in an account in the internal service fund 6 for the cost of assistance of debt collection by the state auditor. Funds deposited in excess of the amount 7 appropriated for operation of the debt collection program must be carried forward into the next fiscal year 8 for operation of the debt collection program. Any excess carried forward into the next fiscal year will must 9 be used to reduce the designated percentage of the collected proceeds charged to the various state 10 agencies. At the end of each biennium, any fund balance in excess of \$10,000 must be transferred back 11 to the general fund."

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14 "15-16-119. Taxation of personal property -- duty of department -- collection by state 15 <u>auditor</u>. (1) If the taxes on personal property are not a lien upon real property in the same county in an 16 amount sufficient to secure the payment of the taxes, the department shall assess the property and 17 compute the tax for the assessment. The department shall notify the county treasurer of the assessment 18 and the amount of taxes due. To compute the taxes due on the personal property, the department shall 19 use the appropriate mills levied during the previous year.

(2) The county treasurer shall notify the person against whom the tax is assessed and any other
person having a properly perfected security interest of record of the amount and due date of the tax. The
tax is due and payable 30 days from the date the treasurer mails the notice. Taxes not paid within 30 days
become delinquent, and the penalty and interest provisions of 15-16-101 must be applied.

(3) The county treasurer shall, after the tax becomes delinquent, <u>EITHER PROCEED UNDER</u>
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 assessed or any other personal property in the hands of the delinquent taxpayer. The county treasurer may
 proceed to sell the property in the same manner as property is sold on execution by the sheriff.

(4) The county treasurer shall, for the purpose of making the levy and sale, direct the sheriff to
 make the levy and sale. The sheriff, undersheriff, or any deputy sheriff of the county is ex officio a deputy
 county treasurer for sale purposes and may receive payment of the taxes, penalty, and interest. The sheriff



1 may receive the same fees as for making a seizure and sale as provided in 15-17-911. 2 (5) The county treasurer and the treasurer's sureties are liable on the treasurer's official bond for all taxes on personal property remaining uncollected by reason of the willful failure and neglect of the 3 4 treasurer to levy upon and sell the personal property for the taxes levied upon the property, including 5 penalty and interest. (6) Failure by the sheriff, undersheriff, or deputy sheriff acting as a deputy county treasurer to 6 7 make the levy and sale results in a levy against the official bond of the sheriff, undersheriff, or deputy 8 sheriff for payment of the delinquent tax, including penalty and interest. 9 (7) The county treasurer shall give the board of county commissioners a list of delinquent personal property taxpayers and the taxes due. The board may order the county treasurer to verify the list under 10 11 oath and to send a copy of the list to the state auditor for collection under Title 17, chapter 4, part 1. 12 (7)(8) The provisions of this section do not apply to property for which delinquent property taxes 13 have been suspended or canceled under the provisions of Title 15, chapter 24, part 17." 14 NEW SECTION. SECTION 7. COORDINATION INSTRUCTIONS. (1) IF [THIS ACT] AND HOUSE 15 16 BILL NO. 563 ARE BOTH PASSED AND APPROVED, THEN: 17 (A) THE DEFINITION OF DEPARTMENT IN [SECTION 11] OF HOUSE BILL NO. 563 IS EFFECTIVE 18 AND THE STRIKING OF THE DEFINITION IN [SECTION 1 OF THIS ACT] IS VOID; (B) THE REFERENCES TO "STATE AUDITOR" IN 17-4-103, 17-4-105, AND 17-4-106 OF [THIS 19 20 ACT] ARE CHANGED TO "DEPARTMENT"; AND 21 (C) REFERENCES TO "STATE AUDITOR" IN 39-51-3207 OF HOUSE BILL NO. 563 ARE CHANGED 22 TO "DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION". 23 (2) IF [THIS ACT] AND HOUSE BILL NO. 36 ARE BOTH PASSED AND APPROVED, THEN THE 24 REFERENCES TO "STATE AUDITOR" IN 53-1-411 ARE CHANGED TO "DEPARTMENT OF 25 ADMINISTRATION". 26 27 NEW SECTION. Section 8. Effective date. [This act] is effective July 1, 1995. 28 -END-



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