

Please Oppose:

HB 188 – Generally revise electric vehicle laws and fees, Rep. Denley Loge (R-Saint Regis), Senate Finance and Claims, Oppose. This bill would add \$250 onto existing registration fees for vehicles that are electric (and \$400 for trucks using electric batteries). This means that owners of electric vehicles that are 4 years old or newer would pay \$467 every year to register, \$337 every year for electric vehicles between 5-10 years, and \$278 every year for electric vehicles older than 11 years. Those amounts are more than every other state in the US (with Georgia being the closest at \$200). *Contact Conor Ploeger, MEIC, at 443-2520 or cploeger@meic.org*

HB 367 - Revise constitutional language regarding harvest heritage, Rep. Paul Fielder (R-Thompson Falls), Senate Fish and Game, Oppose. This referendum would put it to the voters of Montana to adopt a constitutional right to give preference to hunting, fishing, and trapping by citizens as the primary means of the state's management of wild fish and wildlife populations. However, there are many wildlife management tools available to us, guided by science, that should be utilized on an even playing field with hunting, fishing, and trapping. *Contact Amy Seaman, Montana Audubon, at 406-210-9449 or aseaman@mtaudubon.org*

HB 588 - Revise personal staff limits for the executive branch, Rep. Casey Knudsen (R-Malta) Third Reading, Oppose. This bill allows 10% of each state agency's personnel to be appointed by the Governor's Agency directors. For agencies of 100+ persons, 10 staff could be appointed, and for larger agencies, 10% of all personnel could be appointed. *Contact Amy Seaman, Montana Audubon, at 406-210-9449 or aseaman@mtaudubon.org*

HB 637 - Generally revise fish, wildlife, and parks laws, Rep. Seth Berglee (R-Joliet) Senate Fish and Game, Oppose. This bill presents an overhaul of Fish, Wildlife & Parks laws that increases the burden on game wardens by allowing them to enforce laws more broadly on private land, reduces the cost of hound-handler licenses for non-residents, allows hound hunting on private land without licenses, eliminates a limit of D-4 handler license limit, reduces limits to using boats to hunt, increases the amount of money a landowner may receive through block management to \$25,000, allows that wolves may be managed as a furbearer, and takes \$1,000,000 from state special revenue accounts to stock pheasants in the state. Very few good revisions exist in this 27-page bill. *Contact Amy Seaman, Montana Audubon, at 406-210-9449 or aseaman@mtaudubon.org*

HB 661 - Revise taxation of stripper oil and gas wells, Rep. Josh Kassmier (R-Fort Benton), Senate Taxation, Oppose. This bill would create an exemption for "stripper wells" producing natural gas in which they would pay virtually no taxes. Stripper wells would fall into this category if the price per MCF for natural gas is below \$4.75. Prices are currently well below this, and not projected to rise above this price through 2029. Further, stripper wells have received tax breaks in at least the previous two sessions. *Contact Derf Johnson, MEIC, at 406-581-4634 or djohnson@meic.org*

SB 354 - Revise laws related to land servitudes and easements, Sen. Steve Hinebauch (R-Wibaux), Free Conference, Oppose Amendments. This bill was amended in a way that restricts access to public lands, and makes prescriptive easements more difficult to obtain. The Conservation Working Group supports this bill without amendments added in the House. *Contact Nick Gevock, MWF, at 533-9432 or ngevock@mtwf.org*

The Weekly Hotlist is published as an educational service to lawmakers and citizens by the Conservation Working Group, composed of the organizations listed below. Contact Jake Brown, Montana Conservation Voters at 406-855-7821 or Whitner Chase, Montana Conservation Voters at 407-235-8203

Senate Conservation Hotlist, 04/19/2021

** Clark Fork Coalition * Environment Montana * Montana Audubon * Montana Conservation Voters * Montana Environmental Information Center (MEIC) * Montana Public Interest Research Group (MontPIRG) * Montana Wilderness Association * Montana Wildlife Federation * Northern Plains Resource Council * Montana Smart Growth Coalition **