

Please Oppose:

HB 637 - Generally revise fish, wildlife, and parks laws, Rep. Seth Berglee (R-Joliet) Third Reading, 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 Finance and Claims, 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*

HB 695 - Generally revise environmental laws, Rep. Denley Loge (R-Saint Regis), Second Reading, Oppose. This bill has been amended to revive elements of Senate Bill 379 that would allow Northwestern Energy to bypass the Public Service Commission and place the burden on ratepayers when recovering costs incurred through power purchased during maintenance and preventable outages. *Contact Makenna Sellers, NPRC, at 406-850-4491 or makenna@northernplains.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

** 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 **