

Montana House Conservation Hotlist Week 3: January 16, 2023

Please Support:

HB217 - Increase fees for migratory bill licenses, Rep. Gary Perry (R-Colstrip), In First House Committee-Nontabled, Support. This simple bill increases resident game bird licenses from \$6.50 to \$10 for residents and from \$50 to \$150 for non-residents. Money from the sale of these licenses is used for the protection, conservation and development of wetlands in Montana. For more information contact Amy Seaman, Montana Audubon, 406-210-9449 or aseaman@mtaudubon.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.

For questions, please contact Molly Bell with Montana Conservation Voters at 406-698-9440

Clark Fork Coalition * Montana Audubon * Montana Conservation Voters * Montana Environmental Information Center
Montana Renewable Energy Association * Northern Plains Resource Council* Wild Montana

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Please Oppose:

HB170- Repeal state energy policy, Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-Libby) HB 170, In First House Committee-Nontabled, Oppose. HB 170 would repeal Montana's State Energy Policy. Montana needs an energy policy for our state and its agencies which promotes energy efficiency, conservation, production, and consumption of energy sources that represent the least social, environmental and economic costs and the greatest long-term benefits to Montana citizens. It simply makes no sense to repeal this sound principle which has stood for 30 years, especially now in the face of the increasing impacts of climate change that Montana is experiencing. For more information, contact Derf Johnson, MEIC, (406) 581-4634 or djohnson@meic.org.

HB220- Create select committee on energy planning and acquisition, Rep. Josh Kassmier (R-Fort Benton), In First House Committee-Nontabled, Oppose. HB 220 is an attempt by NorthWestern Energy (NWE) to undermine a 2019 law and the recent rules adopted by the Public Service Commission (PSC) both of which greatly improve the resource planning process and the process for the utility to acquire more energy generation resources (a.k.a. power plants). NWE vehemently opposed the 2019 law and the new PSC rules. This bill would establish a partisan committee to review existing law and the newly adopted PSC rules and recommend changes. This committee would be designed to serve the interests of investor-owned utilities. The utilities spent the last two years trying to prevent the PSC from fully implementing the law, but in December 2022, the PSC unanimously voted to approve rules that establish a transparent and competitive bidding process the utility must go through before constructing new generation resources and passing the costs onto customers. While the investor-owned utility's primary interest is to make money for its shareholders, the current law and rules help ensure that the utility keeps the lights on with affordable resources. For more information, contact Ian Lund, MEIC, 406-333-1858 or ilund@meic.org.

HB241- Prohibit government from requiring buildings be constructed with solar panels, Rep. Josh Kassmier (R-Fort Benton), In First House Committee-Nontabled, Oppose. In 2022, the Montana Department of Labor and Industry passed rules which updated Montana's building codes. Part of the rules allow self-governing cities to adopt "stretch codes," which are voluntary city codes that go beyond what the state requires. These voluntary stretch codes allow solar-ready building codes that would require new construction in those jurisdictions to design and build homes in such a way that adding solar would be a cheap, convenient, and efficient option for building owners. HB 241 would ban these solar ready stretch codes at a time when we need local governments to help create solutions to the climate crisis. For more information, contact Ian Lund, MEIC, 406-333-1858 or ilund@meic.org and Makenna Sellers, Montana Renewable Energy Association at (406) 214-9405 or makenna@MontanaRenewables.org.

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