

## Montana Senate Conservation Hotlist Week 5: January 30, 2023

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### PLEASE SUPPORT:

**SJ 9- Joint resolution establishing soil health week and day, Sen. Bruce Gillespie (R- Ethridge), Referred to Senate Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Support.** This resolution designates the first week in April as Montana Soil Health Week, and the first Wednesday in April as Montana Soil Health Day. The resolution encourages agencies, organizations, and individuals to observe the week and day. For more information, contact Caroline Canarios, Northern Plains Resource Council, 406-248-1154 or [caroline@northernplains.org](mailto:caroline@northernplains.org).

**SB 58 - Increase landowner payment cap for block management, Senator Steve Hinebauch (R - Wibaux) Passed Second Reading 45-4, Scheduled for third reading for 1.30, Support** This bill increases the financial compensation cap offered to landowners as assistance for access to their land for the public and hunting. Currently compensation is \$13 per hunter day and would top out at \$50,000 instead of the current \$25,000. For more information contact Molly Bell, MCV, 406-698-9440 or [molly@mtvoters.org](mailto:molly@mtvoters.org), and Amy Seaman, MT Audubon, 406-210-9449 or [aseaman@mtaudubon.org](mailto: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. Contact Molly Bell, 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

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### PLEASE OPPOSE:

**HB 170-Repeal state energy policy**, Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-Libby) Hearing scheduled in Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee for 1.31, 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](mailto:djohnson@meic.org).

**SB 55- Join Interstate Mining Compact Commission**, Sen. Steve Hinebauch (R-Wibaux), Hearing held in Senate Natural Resources Committee on 1.25, Oppose. This bill would authorize Montana to join the Interstate Mining Compact Commission as a full member. The bill would require \$30,000 of state funds in membership fees annually, which would otherwise be dedicated towards other programs at the Montana Department of Environmental Quality. The Commission opposes reforming and modernizing the regulation of hardrock mining on public lands. For more information please contact Derf Johnson, MEIC, 406-581-4634 or [djohnson@meic.org](mailto:djohnson@meic.org) and Caroline Canarias, Northern Plains Resource Council, 406-248-1154 or [caroline@northernplains.org](mailto:caroline@northernplains.org).

**SB 178- Generally revise crypto currency laws**, Sen. Daniel Zolnikov (R-Billings), Referred to Senate Business, Labor and Economic Affairs, Oppose. This bill would prevent the Public Service Commission (PSC) from setting rates on cryptocurrency mining operations, prevent taxation of crypto and prevent local governments from exercising certain powers over residential and industrial crypto "mines." Local governments also should have the authority to make siting and land use decisions for their communities. For more information contact Ian Lund, MEIC, 406-333-1858 or [ilund@meic.org](mailto:ilund@meic.org).

**SB 200- Revise use of party affiliation for nonpartisan races**, Sen. Greg Hertz (R-Polson), Referred to Senate State Administration Committee, Oppose. This bill would allow candidates for nonpartisan races to declare a partisan affiliation and to have that appear on the ballot, including judicial candidates. Creating partisan offices in judicial races is an attack on the American concept of the independent judiciary. Judges should be elected based on their qualifications- not based on their party affiliation. Citizens need to have the assurance that a judge will be impartial in all cases before the court. For more information contact Molly Bell, MCV, 406-698-9440 or [molly@mtvoters.org](mailto:molly@mtvoters.org).

**SB 208- Prohibit local governments from banning or limiting energy choices**, Sen. Jason Small (R-Busby), Hearing held in Senate Energy and Telecommunications on 1.31, Oppose. SB 208 prevents the Department of Labor and Industry, which writes the state building code, from including any language that prohibits or limits the use of any energy resources. Additionally, this bill denies local governments any power to "prohibit or impede the connection" of any fossil fuel infrastructure in their jurisdictions. This precludes cities and counties from taking meaningful action on greenhouse gas emissions through stretch codes or regulations. Methane gas is harmful to health, the environment, and the climate. Recent studies show that indoor emissions from gas appliances can contribute to childhood asthma. Local governments should be allowed to mitigate those impacts to address the concerns of their constituents. Energy decisions in a community should be made by the people closest to the issues, not legislators. For more information contact Anne Hedges, MEIC, 406-461-9546 or [ahedges@meic.org](mailto:ahedges@meic.org) or Ian Lund, MEIC, 406-333-1858 or [ilund@meic.org](mailto:ilund@meic.org).

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**SB 228-Prohibit local governments from banning petroleum fuel, Sen. Jason Smalls (R-Busby). Referred to Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee, Oppose.** SB 228 would prohibit local governments from protecting public health, safety or welfare from any type of petroleum product (e.g. oil or gas). It would force local governments to allow compressor stations, gas stations, and pipelines, gas power plants, petroleum refineries, and more, regardless of size or impact, near residential properties, daycares, and schools. Local governments would not even be allowed to mitigate impacts from noise, lighting, or truck traffic. For more information contact Anne Hedges, MEIC, 406-461-9546 or [ahedges@MEIC.org](mailto:ahedges@MEIC.org) and Caroline Canarios, NPRC, 901-651-5930 or [caroline@northernplains.org](mailto:caroline@northernplains.org).

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