

Montana House Conservation Hotlist: Week of January 20, 2025

	SUPPORT	OPPOSE
HB 160	✓	
HB 30		X
HB 176		X
HB 222		X

PLEASE SUPPORT:

HB 160—An act repealing the local government prohibition of the regulation of auxiliary containers, Rep. Ed Stafman (D-Bozeman), Awaiting E.A., House Local Government, 1/21, 3pm, Support. This bill repeals a law that takes power away from local governments by disallowing them from controlling single-use plastics. Plastics bloat our waste streams and pollute our waters. The existing ban impedes on Montanan's right to a clean and healthful environment. Contact: Ben Catton, MEIC, 307-920-1843, bcatton@meic.org, or Owen McDaniel, MontPIRG, owenmacdan@gmail.com, 406-475-2054.

PLEASE OPPOSE:

HB 30—Require the Supreme Court to apply a burden of proof for challenge to constitutionality of legislative act, Rep. Lee Deming (R-Laurel), Awaiting E.A., House Judiciary, Oppose. This bill attempts to force the Supreme Court to uphold a state legislative act unless the challenger can demonstrate that the act is unconstitutional “beyond a reasonable doubt”—a very high standard that deviates from the long-standing review process courts apply in deciding whether laws violate constitutional rights and principals. It undermines the judiciary's role in safeguarding constitutional rights and shifts the balance of power too far toward the legislature. Contact: Derf Johnson, MEIC, 406-581-4634, djohnson@meic.org, or Kearnstyn Cook, MCV, 406-426-2422, kearnstyn@mtvoters.org.

HB 176—Require unlimited wolf hunting quota when population is at or above 450 wolves, Rep. Shannon Maness (R-Dillon), Hearing, House Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 1/21, 3pm, Oppose. This bill mandates the commission to set an unlimited statewide quota on wolves while the population estimate remains equal to or greater than 450, the minimum population that Montana must maintain to stave off ESA relisting and retain state management of the species. It also removes commission authority to regulate trapping/snaring and set quotas by hunting district, meaning that wolves could be eradicated from regions with low historic populations and quotas. HB 176 sidesteps the commission and its robust public process for managing wolves. Contact: Peter Dudley, MT Audubon, 406-443-3949, peter@mtaudubon.org.

HB 222—Creating open wolf hunting season until the population is at or below a certain number, Rep. Lukas Schubert (R-Kalispell), Hearing, House Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 1/21, 3pm, Oppose. This bill creates an open season on wolves, provides for unlimited licenses to individuals, restricts the commission's authority to set a season, and restricts its ability to close the season if wolves are “threatened with undue depletion” while the population remains above 600. HB 222 impedes Montana from properly managing wolves while the state's management authority is still at risk. Contact: Peter Dudley, MT Audubon, 406-443-3949, peter@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 Kearnstyn Cook with MCV at 406-426-2422 or Natalie Wright with MCV at 406-426-2645.

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers * Montana Audubon * Montana Conservation Voters * Montana Environmental Information Center * Montana Renewable Energy Association * MontPIRG * Northern Plains Resource Council * Wild Montana