

WEEKLY REPORT  
Missoula  
Week Ending 1-8-2021

UPCOMING NEXT WEEK:

**HB21:** Authorize funding for the multifamily coal trust home loan program. Hearing 1-11 House Tax.  
Position: SUPPORT

This is a continuation and expansion of the measure last session that was tremendously successful for local affordable housing projects. Lobbyists had a call with the Montana Housing Coalition on 1/8 and discussed this bill among others. Coalition appreciates our support, but believes it's best to have smaller communities that benefited from the 2019 legislation to take the lead. We will not testify, but will encourage our delegations to SUPPORT.

**SB73:** Provide for local distribution of lodging sales tax revenue. Hearing 1-14 Senate Tax. A potential avenue to get lodging and sales tax money to local communities.  
Position: MONITOR/SUPPORT. We are generally following the lead of the League on this one. May choose not to be active. Needs Review.

**SB77:** Revise allowable special district assessment methods. Hearing 1-15 Senate Tax  
Position: OPPOSE

Limits the amount of assessment to fund a special district, requires dissolution of a special district after 10 years and allows for a dissolution by petition by owners of 50 percent of the property. Lobbyists need specific talking points. Request legislative team also reach out as possible to delegation members. League also opposing.

**SB78:** Revise special district financing and dissolution provisions. Hearing 1-15 in Senate Local Government.  
Position: OPPOSE

Removes taxable value as a method of assessment for special districts, removing local control and likely completely upending what a lot of communities have been doing for years. Lobbyists need specific talking points. Request legislative team also reach out as possible to delegation members. League also opposing.

**HB102:** Generally Revise Gun laws. Executive Action 1-11  
Position: OPPOSE

Hearing was held 1-6. Bill sponsor initially indicated he would remove most concerning section or amend it. Has now indicated he likely will not do that. We will be pursuing additional fixes if possible on the Senate side.

**HB78:** Require certain employees to report suspected child abuse and neglect. Hearing in House Judiciary 1-12. Potential concerns regarding liability on local governments and even volunteers who work with children at city-sponsored camps, activities and programs. Nugent doesn't believe there are major issues with this. Bozeman considering opposing.  
Position: MONITOR/OPPOSE

**HB113** - penalizes healthcare professionals up to 50,000 dollars for providing transition related medical care to transgender youth under the age of 18. Hearing in House Judiciary 1-13

Position: NEEDS REVIEW

**HB112:** Require interscholastic athletes to participate under sex assigned at birth. Hearing in House Judiciary 1-13.

Position: NEEDS REVIEW

NEW BILLS OF CONCERN OR INTEREST:

**HB107:** Revise mill levy election laws

Position: RECOMMEND OPPOSE

This bill appears to be an effort to limit (suppress) a majority of voters from being able to decide local government property tax issues by requiring two-thirds approval. Would likely make it impossible for local governments to manage property taxes appropriately.

**HB134:** Allow zoning for duplex, triplex, and fourplex housing in certain municipalities:

Position: OPPOSE

**SB10:** Providing for circuit breaker income tax credit for property taxes paid.

This bill repeals four specific property tax assistance programs or credits in favor of a more comprehensive "circuit breaker" income tax credit for property taxes. This includes benefits for both property owners and renters based on income.

Position: NEEDS REVIEW. RECOMMEND SUPPORT

STATUS OF PRIORITY ISSUES:

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** Lobbyists spent considerable time discussing this issue with stakeholders and legislators this week with numerous meetings and correspondence. We were not successful in persuading Rep. Tenenbaum to withdraw his HB134, but have made efforts to secure a broad base of opposition to it. We continue to work with the league closely on this. We met with Rep. Sue Vinton to discuss her LC0304, which would prohibit inclusionary housing ordinances. Our talk was productive. We discussed having further talks about reasonable sideboards to inclusionary ordinances. As noted earlier, we had a very good call with housing coalition and the league to discuss a variety of other issues, including LC0304, and HB134. Our efforts to be proactive had turned reactive due to very potentially harmful bill introductions.

**Local Option:** Bill draft with Rep. Pope's help is in the drafting stages now. We hope to have a look at it by or before 1-15

**Property Tax Relief:**

SB10 may be an interesting approach to look at in addition to the Pope approach. We are watching to see if additional bills come together.