

66th LEGISLATURE

2019 SESSION

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BUSINESS REPORT

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 66th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday, February 7, 2019

Time: 3:00 PM

Place: Capitol

Room: 152

BILLS and RESOLUTIONS HEARD:

HB 353 - Generally revise laws related to alcohol and drug addiction - Rep. Kathy Kelker

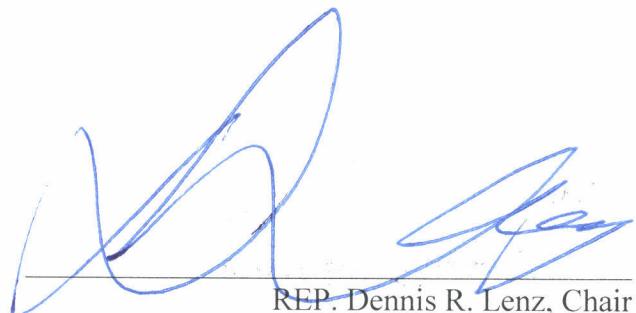
HB 378 - Require workfare participation for SNAP recipients - Rep. Peggy Webb

HJ 9 - Interim study on maintaining public safety while offering addiction treatment - Rep. Kathy Kelker

EXECUTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

None

Comments:



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dennis R. Lenz", is written over a horizontal line. Below the signature, the text "REP. Dennis R. Lenz, Chair" is printed in a smaller, black, sans-serif font.



The Big Sky Country

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE ROLL CALL

DATE: 2/7/19

| NAME | PRESENT | ABSENT/EXCUSED |
|--------------------------|---------|----------------|
| REP. LENZ, CHAIR | ✓ | |
| REP. BUTTREY, VICE CHAIR | ✓ | |
| REP. KARJALA, VICE CHAIR | | ✓ |
| REP. ABBOTT | ✓ | |
| REP. BAHR | ✓ | |
| REP. BESSETTE | ✓ | |
| REP. DUNN | ✓ | |
| REP. DUNWELL | | ✓ |
| REP. KELKER | ✓ | |
| REP. MANDEVILLE | | ✓ |
| REP. TERRY MOORE | ✓ | |
| REP. PIERSON | | ✓ |
| REP. RICCI | ✓ | |
| REP. SALES | ✓ | |
| REP. SHELDON-GALLOWAY | | ✓ |
| REP. USHER | ✓ | |
| REP. WEBB | ✓ | |
| REP. WELCH | ✓ | |
| REP. WINTER | ✓ | |

19 MEMBERS

**MONTANA House of Representatives
Visitors Register
HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Thursday, February 7, 2019

HJ 9 - Interim study on maintaining public safety while offering addiction treatment

Sponsor: Rep. Kathy Kelker

PLEASE PRINT

Please leave prepared testimony with Secretary. Witness Statement forms are available if you care to submit written testimony.

**MONTANA House of Representatives
Visitors Register
HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Thursday, February 7, 2019

HB 378 - Require workfare participation for SNAP recipients

Sponsor: Rep. Peggy Webb

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Please leave prepared testimony with Secretary. Witness Statement forms are available if you care to submit written testimony.

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Thursday, February 7, 2019

HB 353 - Generally revise laws related to alcohol and drug addiction

Sponsor: Rep. Kathy Kelker

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Please leave prepared testimony with Secretary. Witness Statement forms are available if you care to submit written testimony.

WITNESS STATEMENT

February 7, 2019

Members of the House Human Services Committee

RE: HB 378

I am The Rev. Donna Gleaves, an ordained deacon in the Episcopal Church assigned to St. Peter's Cathedral here in Helena, and a member of MAC (the Montana Association of Christians). I write today with great concern about HB 378 – "Require workfare participation for SNAP recipients."

SNAP is our most important program to reduce hunger in Montana. It makes an enormous difference for people: it provides nutrition and peace of mind for individuals and families to know there will be some food on the table for them. Most people on SNAP who can work, already do so. Those who are not working often face significant barriers: health, cost of child care, no transportation (public or private), unstable housing, criminal records, etc. All of these barriers would make it difficult or impossible to participate in a mandatory workfare program.

Food insecurity/hunger is devastating for Montana's families. It impacts health, the ability to learn, and the ability to be active and productive citizens of our great state. Families are doing their best to survive. We shouldn't require them to work without pay in order to receive food assistance. Both the Hebrew scriptures and the New Testament tell us to take care of the widowed, the orphaned, the poor, the hungry and the sick. Matthew 25:40 tells us – "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." We have a moral obligation to help our neighbors, and to feed the hungry.

I urge you to oppose HB 378. Thank you.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Donna Gleaves

7580 Kingpost Loop
Helena, MT 59602
406-223-9588

WITNESS STATEMENT

Submitted to the House Human Services Committee in opposition to HB378, Require workfare participation for SNAP recipients.

February 7, 2019

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, my name is Kate Devino, President-Elect of the Montana Association of WIC Agencies. The Montana Association of WIC Agencies provides a collaborative forum to advocate professional growth and promote integrity of nutrition services to Montana's women, infants and children. Our members are WIC program staff from 29 local WIC agencies and 80 clinic sites throughout Montana.

As we understand it, HB 378 would impose work requirements on families with children older than six years of age. This will create confusion and reduce SNAP participation even for families with children under the age of six.

HB 378 would hurt thousands of children in Montana whose parents may not be able to prove they meet all the requirements and then lose vital food assistance.

Adults who can work do work. HB 378 would hurt low income workers who don't have sick leave to care for a child or other family member. In many low wage jobs, hours fluctuate, and workers may fall in and out of the required number of work hours.

In our experience, families participating in food assistance programs are working very hard to improve their lives and become financially self-sufficient. This bill will result in a loss of a vital tool to help many families do just that.

Please do not add another barrier for low income families struggling to provide enough food for their children.

Kate Devino, President-Elect, Montana Association of WIC Agencies
kathryn617@yahoo.com

WITNESS STATEMENT

Dear Representative Winter and Members of the Committee,

We write today as the management team at Missoula Food Bank & Community Center, a local, direct-service provider of emergency food assistance in Missoula County. We strongly oppose HB 378, which puts struggling families, older adults, and children in our State at further risk of food insecurity and hunger.

In 2018, we served 26,243 unique individuals in our community for a total of 112,111 services through our emergency food pantry. This is not unique to Missoula: across the state, so many Montanans are struggling just to keep food on the table.

SNAP is the most effective anti-hunger tool we have as Montanans. This program comes packaged with strict eligibility standards and requirements for families who utilize the assistance.

HB 378 further steepens this uphill climb for families who are trying to keep their kids nourished, for older adults who are aging in poverty, and for those who have been displaced in our economy. Workfare programs penalize our most vulnerable and shut people out of the ability to lead healthy, fulfilling lives.

As Montanans, we must band together to support every person who calls Montana home. At the very least, we must not go out of our way to legislate harm upon those most at-risk in our communities.

Please join us in opposing this bill. Vote NO on HB 378.

Signed: Aaron Brock, Executive Director

Kelli Hess, Operations Director

Jessica Allred, Director of Development & Advocacy

WITNESS STATEMENT

Date: 2-7-2019

To: House Human Services Committee
From: Adam Bedgood
Subject: Please Oppose HB378

To Whom it may concern

This bill will drastically effect me and my living situation. I have mental and physical disabilities that prevent me from computers, getting to and from places to do work program. I have no car and bus for rural to get me to a closer urban city to do (workforce) requirement workfare participation for SNAP. I live in a rural, where a gallon of milk cost 5 dollars versus Bozeman a gallon cost half that. I already have a hard time applying for (SNAP). I have a hard time getting support to help me in these matters.

Please do not vote on Bill HB378 cause it will cause me extreme difficulty, if not impossible to get these programs.

Thank you,
Adam Bedgood
West Yellowstone, MT
773-677-2599



WITNESS STATEMENT

February 7, 2019

Dear Vice Chair Buttrey, Representatives Bessette and Sheldon-Galloway, and Members of the Committee:

I write today on behalf of the Great Falls Community Food Bank. I ask that you join me and our Cascade County anti-hunger community in opposing HB 378, a bill that puts at risk more of our neighbors living in the margins here in Great Falls, and across the State.

The Great Falls Community Food Bank serves more than 65 different organizations both in and around Cascade County including our public schools, Meals on Wheels, and many more. Our mission is to engage, educate and lead our community in the fight against hunger. Among our most important projects are our Backpacks4Kids Program which feeds underprivileged elementary school children on weekends and holidays, and our grocery recover program, which allows us to distribute soon-to-expire foods to those in need. With more than 10,000 people in our County suffering from food insecurity, we are a vital organization that eases the burden for our most underprivileged residents—giving them a chance to look for work, pay for vital meds instead of food, and study on a full stomach. We are here to stabilize lives and make a difference in Cascade County.

SNAP is the most important anti-hunger tool we have as Montanans. Those who seek this assistance already face strict eligibility standards and requirements. HB 378 further steepens this uphill climb for families who are trying to keep their kids nourished, for older adults who are aging in poverty, and for those who have been displaced in our economy – many of whom are Veterans in our community. Workfare programs penalize our most vulnerable and shut people out of the ability to lead healthy, fulfilling lives.

As Montanans, we must band together to support every person who calls Montana home. At the very least, we must not go out of our way to legislate harm upon those most at-risk in our communities. Please join us in opposing this bill. Vote NO on HB 378.

Signed:

Shaun M. Tatarka
Executive Director