

**MINUTES**  
**MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**68th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**  
**COMMITTEE ON (H) AGRICULTURE**

**Call to Order:** Chair Dave Fern-D, on January 24, 2023 at 3:16 PM, in 137

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:** Rep. Joshua Kassmier, Chair (R)  
Rep. Dave Fern, Vice Chair (D)  
Rep. Marty Malone, Vice Chair (R)  
Rep. Fred Anderson (R)  
Rep. Brad Barker (R)  
Rep. James Bergstrom (R)  
Rep. Tony Brockman (R)  
Rep. Bob Carter (D)  
Rep. Julie Dooling (R)  
Rep. Greg Kmetz (R)  
Rep. Melissa Romano (D)  
Rep. Marvin Weatherwax (D)  
Rep. Zack Wirth (R)

**Members Excused:** Rep. Paul Green (R)  
Rep. Casey Knudsen (R)  
Rep. Braxton Mitchell (R)  
Rep. Frank Smith (D)  
Rep. Katie Sullivan (D)  
Rep. Kenneth Walsh (R)

**Staff Present:** Andria Hardin, Research Analyst  
Rose Harmon, Secretary  
Loran Nelson, Remote Meeting Coordinator

**Audio Committees:** These minutes are in outline form only. They provide a list of participants and a record of official action taken by the committee. The link to the audio recording of the meeting is available on the Legislative Branch website.

**Committee Business Summary:**

Hearing & Date Posted:

HB 276 01/20/2023

Executive Action:

15:16:35 Chair Kassmier passed the gavel and yielded the chair to Vice Chair Fern.  
15:18:29 Chair Kassmier has left

**HEARING ON HB 276 - Establish a farm to food bank grant program**

**Opening Statement:**

15:19:46 Vice Chair Marty Malone (R), HD 59, opened the hearing on HB 276, Establish a farm to food bank grant program.

**Discussion:**

15:18:41 Rep. Casey Knudsen joined the meeting.  
15:19:14 Rep. Braxton Mitchell joined the meeting.

**Proponent Testimony:**

12:23:51 Rep. Kenneth Walsh joined the meeting.  
15:21:58 John Wallace, National Center for Appropriate Technology  
15:24:11 Maura Henn, Grow Montana Coalition  
15:27:22 Rachel Prevost, Montana Farmer's Union  
15:28:12 Lorianne Burhop, Chief Policy Officer, Montana Food Bank Network (MFBN)

[EXHIBIT\(230124AGHa1\)](#)

15:31:15 Patrick Yawakie, Blackfeet Tribe and People's Food Sovereignty Program  
15:33:42 Katie Adams, Director, Teton County Food Pantry  
15:35:56 Gretchen Boyer, Executive Director, Land to Hand

[EXHIBIT\(230124AGHa2\)](#)

15:38:20 Sophie Albert, Executive Director, North Valley Food Bank in Whitefish  
15:41:15 Rep. Paul Green joined the meeting.

15:41:22 Rep. Katie Sullivan joined the meeting.

15:42:04 Eleanor Ross, Helping Hands Food Bank

15:45:08 Mandy Blohm, Garden and Nutrition Coordinator, Helena Food Share (HFS)

15:48:01 Jamie Quinn, Executive Director, Flathead Food Bank

15:51:04 Lauren Wilson, Pediatrician, President of Montana Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics

15:51:52 Ethan Hanley, Associated Students of the University of Montana

15:52:50 Tony Brockman, Board Member, Flathead Food Bank, serves as Montana House Representative (R), HD 9

15:54:33 Andrea Buckingham, Self as registered dietician and licensed nutritionist

15:57:54 Shauna Stephenson, Owner, Good Mama Farm

16:00:16 Jeanie Alderson, Bones Brothers Ranch, Omega Beef, and Northern Plains Resource Council

16:03:16 Ellie Costello, Owner, Black Bear Soups and Produce

16:04:54 Alexandra Thornton, Self

16:06:39 George Peirce, Executive Director, Livingston Food Resource Center

16:08:12 Ian Finch, Food Access Program Director, Community Food and Agriculture Coalition

16:12:44 Elaine Stedman, Executive Director, Boys and Girls Club of Richland County

16:14:31 Dave Prather, General Manager, Western Montana Grower's Cooperative

16:15:50 Heather Bilden, Owner/Operator, Coulee Creek Ranch

16:18:05 Laurie Little Dog, Self

**Opponent Testimony:**

None

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

16:21:22 Andy Fjeseth, Bureau Chief, Agriculture Development and Marketing  
Bureau, Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA)

**Questions from Committee:**

16:22:02 Rep. Bob Carter  
16:22:33 Andy Fjeseth, MDA  
16:25:07 Rep. Marty Malone-R  
16:25:22 Lorianne Burhop, MFBN  
16:27:14 Rep. James Bergstrom  
16:28:02 Lorianne Burhop, MFBN  
16:29:10 Rep. Casey Knudsen  
16:29:38 Lorianne Burhop, MFBN  
16:30:22 Mandy Blohm, HFS  
16:32:14 Rep. Casey Knudsen  
16:32:47 Katie Adams, Teton County Food Pantry  
16:33:53 Rep. Bob Carter  
16:34:28 Lorianne Burhop, MFBN  
16:35:36 Vice Chair Dave Fern  
16:36:06 Lorianne Burhop, MFBN  
16:37:23 Rep. Bob Carter

**Closing Statement:**

16:37:48 Vice Chair Marty Malone (R), HD 59, closed the hearing on HB 276.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment: 16:40:20

---

Rose Harmon, Secretary

Additional Documents: [EXHIBIT\(230124AGHaad\)](#)