EXHIBIT 2
DATE 2-2-05
HB HB 395

Bill – Here's some information from Missoula County (Leslie Halligan). I have two other hearings at 3:00 today and will try to get in to testify in support of Rep. Becker's bill. If I can't get there, I would be grateful if you could get this information to the committee members on behalf of Missoula County.
Thanks, Linda Stoll

I've reviewed this bill and would support it - we have been trying to have the State assume some of the costs of commitment because Missoula County seems to bear the burden of committing most of the people in Western Montana, at least south of Kalispell. Most of the people that we file petitions on are committed. However, some of the people that are detained, do accept voluntary treatment after several days in the hospital. The way I read the bill, the County would be responsible for these costs on a continuing basis. These may amount to 1/4 to 1/3 of the overall costs. As it is, we end up paying for costs incurred at St. Patrick Hospital and at the State Hospital, which probably exceed $250,000. I filed about 100 new commitment cases last year; there are about the same amount in repeat cases, either for extensions of commitment or renewed petitions in existing cases.
The only suggestion I would have is to put similar language into the statute, perhaps in 53-21-124, so that when the County is required to file a petition and request that the person be apprehended and detained (the person refuses to enter the hospital) which is the vast majority of the cases, that these costs would also be assumed by the state if the person is committed by the Court. This process doesn't seem to be clear in the existing bill. Please contact me if you have questions, or anyone in Helena has questions. Leslie 544-9596 Cell; 258-4952 office.