

Appropriations Committee on Education  
Meagher County Request for Funding of Extension Agent  
Jamie Doggett, Commissioner  
Meagher County  
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Members of the Committee.

For the Record I am Jamie Doggett, Meagher County Commissioner here today to request your consideration and support for new funding for an Extension Agent for Meagher County. First, I must explain why we are asking for this money and not MSU Extension in their proposal. My constituents, several who are here today, approached the Commissioners late last fall requesting an Extension Agent for Meagher County. At that time I approached Representative Harry Klock and Senator Dave Lewis to inquire about the process and timeline. We already knew we were well behind the deadline to be included in MSU's appropriation request, but decided to see what we could do for our constituents through this process today.

Meagher County is seeking funding for a full time Extension Agent and will, if successful here, place the issue of county funding for additional mils on the upcoming school district ballot in early May. Meagher County's share of the funding is 65% of the Clerk and Recorder's salary, which is approximately \$22,000/ year. Our 65% is approximately \$14300. Meagher County provides office space and equipment and other minor expenses. MSU/State funding would be 35% of that \$22,000, which is approximately \$7,700. They also provide benefits for this employee. I do not have those total numbers at this time.

Meagher County is asking this Committee and the Legislature to consider our request, but we would make two additional requests. First, we ask that if our mil levy vote fails, we not be obligated to take the appropriation. Without the support from the residents of Meagher County there is no way that the County could pay for this position with our General Fund money as our budget stands currently. In other words, if we can't get the support at home we would not need your support. Second, we ask that this money be new, additional money above what MSU Extension has requested. They in good faith prepared their budget request with their priorities. Meagher County Commissioners feel it is important to have an Extension Agent in Meagher County, but it should come in addition to MSU's request.

Meagher County Commissioners are supportive of the position for County Extension Agent and will work closely with our constituents and MSU through this entire process.

I apologize for the length of my comments and will answer any questions the Committee might have if I am able.

Thank you,

