

Chairperson Christine Kaufmann, Chair and Joint Appropriations Sub Committee on Health and Human Services members:

Senator Dan Weinberg, Senator John Cobb, Senator Greg Lind, Representative Walter McNutt, Representative Joey Jayne, Representative Penny Morgan, and Laura Good

Subject: SB332 (A Nickel a Pop for Aging Moms and Pops)



Thank you for allowing us to speak today.

I am Carma Gilligan, a senior volunteer, and President of the Missoula Senior Service Corps in Missoula. The MSSC consists of three National Programs—Missoula Retired and Senior Volunteer Program-558 volunteers, Foster Grandparent program-47 volunteers, and Senior Companion program-43 volunteers. In 2004 these three programs volunteers have volunteered 132,682 hours of service to Missoula. Volunteering is an important part of my life, and keeps me out of my husband's hair as he would say. When we had our family and I was working full time, I was not able to participate in the community. Now I have the time and WANT to make a difference in meeting some of the communities needs.

It is satisfying to me to see my results and I know that I have made a difference! Some of my results are:

- 1. Helped seniors comparing their medical bills with Medicare bills (AIMS-Advocates in Medicare Savings)**—I helped one senior with her 100+ bills and finally got her insurance to start paying for her health care
- 2. Delivered meals on wheels** for the less unfortunate and sometimes homebound

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2. **Delivered meals on wheels** for the less unfortunate and sometimes homebound

3. **Bagged food at the Food Bank** with my grandchildren
4. **Worked on Habitat for Humanity houses** and playgrounds for the community-I ran the miter saw and helped in the kitchen
5. **Delivered Daffodils for the American Cancer fund-raiser**
6. **Currently do data entry for the Police Department and St. Patrick's Hospital** which frees up permanent employees to do what they are paid to do other than administrative tasks.

How have I used the volunteer services before I retired as you can use?

1. **Meals on Wheels** were delivered for a family member who had Alzheimer's; she was able to stay at home for another year.
2. **Senior Companion** was used when I needed a couple hours respite after my husband's open heart surgery
3. **Helping a family member with her medical bills**—I was able to get \$4,000 refunded to her – he didn't know how to fill out the insurance forms so he paid the bills himself.
4. **Care giver assistance** to find Alzheimer's support system, medical AND care giver facilities for this family member.
5. **Transportation was provided** for Dr.'s visits, shopped for groceries for someone who wasn't able to drive anymore.

Federal monies have remained the same since 2003. State costs have increased by 1.7 million. Our senior population is growing in Montana (approximately 17.6 % of our population today).

We have come before you before, but were told, "No money at this time".

We have an avenue for this money and hope that we can become the 8th state with soft drink fees to be used for "Nickel a pop for Aging Moms and Pops.

Thank you so much for listening to our concerns and we hope that you will consider Senate Bill332 for your and my aging Moms and Pops.