

RESOLUTION 2004-32

INCREASE THE VICTIM WITNESS SURCHARGE

It is the intent of the Montana Association of Counties to seek an increase of the current \$25 fee to \$50 for each misdemeanor and felony charge under Title 45, 61-8-401 or 61-8-406 to assist in funding Victim Services Programs.

WHEREAS, counties provide Victim Services Programs to assist hundreds of victims of violent crime each year; and

WHEREAS, grant funding for these programs continues to decline on an annual basis; and

WHEREAS, the intent of the original legislation [MCA 46-18-236(c)] was to have offenders pay for victim's services; and

WHEREAS, courts should be allowed to charge a more substantial fee in order to further the intent of the law and provide adequate services to victims of the offender's crimes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Montana Association of Counties seek an increase of the current \$25 fee charged to offenders of violent crime to assist Courts in providing victim's services.

Suggested change: 46-18-236 (1)(c) "an additional ~~\$25~~ \$50 for each misdemeanor and felony charge under Title 45, 61-8-401, or 61-8-406."

SPONSOR: District 9

RECOMMENDATION: Do Pass

PRIORITY: High

REFERRED TO: MACo Justice and Public Safety Committee

ADOPTED: Annual Convention, Missoula, MT
September 29, 2004