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THE HEART OF THE GALLATIN VALLEY

EXHIBIT 5
DATE 1.24.05
69

January 24, 2005

Attn: Chairman Jim Peterson
Natural Resources Appropriation Committee

I am writing this letter in opposition to HB 69. This will take money away from financially strapped small communities like Manhattan. Manhattan is working hard to fund a DEQ mandated new wastewater system. In spite of all the grants available to the Town the sewer rates and sewer impact fees are becoming a hardship to present and future rate payers.

I realize water adjudication is important but eliminating the grant program does not seem necessary. I understand the Governor has already allocated 2 million dollars to go toward water adjudication and HB 22 is the lead bill for funding that program.

Thank you for considering what I have to say.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Mest

Eleanor Mest
Mayor
Town of Manhattan