



EXHIBIT 1
DATE 2.18.05
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MOUNTAIN WATER COMPANY

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**Testimony of Mountain Water Company
House Natural Resources Committee
59th Session of 2005 Legislature
OPPONENT OF HOUSE BILL 622**

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT PROVIDING AN EXEMPTION TO PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN ASSOCIATIONS; DEFINING THE TERM 'ASSOCIATION' AND AMENDING SECTIONS 75-6-107, 75-6-112, AND 75-6-126, MCA."

Chairman Peterson and members of the House Natural Resources Committee:

For the record, my name is Frank C. Crowley, and I represent Mountain Water Company of Missoula. I have brought my testimony in written form and ask that it be distributed at this time to the members of the Committee.

As a regulated, privately owned public water supply system that has provided water to the residents, businesses and institutions of Missoula for over 25 years, Mountain Water Company sympathizes with any water system regarding the challenges of meeting public water supply system requirements. However, Mountain Water Company must oppose House Bill 622 because of the serious potential impacts it poses.

First, Mountain Water Company supports Department of Environmental Quality primacy in water quality regulation. House Bill 622 would result in the loss of DEQ primacy, with the result that the federal Environmental Protection Agency, not DEQ, would have regulatory authority over Montana water supply systems. Such a loss of state primacy could result in not only federal control over local water supply systems, but even the loss of State Revolving Fund monies.

Second, based on the definition of "public water supply system" under 75-6-102(16), MCA, House Bill 622 is not necessary to exempt small systems with fewer than 15 connections or service to under 25 people from public water system requirements. Small systems are already exempt.

Third, and perhaps most important, House Bill 622 poses a grave danger to public health and safety. As we in Missoula are well aware, there is hardly anything more important to public health than safe drinking water. House Bill 622 has the potential to place public

health at risk simply by opting out of state drinking water regulations. Public health standards for drinking water exist to protect all of us. House Bill 622 devalues the need for drinking water safety and the importance of public health.

With respect to the good intentions of the sponsor, I respectfully urge this committee to table House Bill 622. Thank you.

***** END *****