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February 2, 2005

EXHIBIT 4
DATE 2-2-05
HB 338

Representative Jent and members of the House State Administration Committee,

For the record, my name is Darrell Rud, Executive Director of the School Administrators of Montana.

I would like to convey my support and that of the School Administrators of Montana for **HB338** that would strengthen professional retirement options for TRS members.

Our association initially passed the following resolution in August of 2001, advocated for Representative Jent's HB133 in the 2003 session and were disappointed in its failure to pass! HB338 would clearly address some of the complex recruiting & retention issues in our state. We're prematurely continuing to lose too many good administrators and teachers who leave our state in the prime of their career and are eagerly "gobbled up" by other states that highly value these professional educators. In August of 2004, the issue was again addressed in our Delegate Assembly and it was again validated by the Assembly and our membership that:

Resolution #01/03-02 – RETIREMENT

WHEREAS: School administrators and teachers are leaving Montana education after 25 years of enrollment in the TRS system to take jobs in other occupations and states, allowing them to collect full retirement from Montana TRS and at the same time collect another salary elsewhere and;

WHEREAS: Montana faces a serious shortage of administrators and teachers and;

WHEREAS: An ever-increasing percentage of administrators and teachers are eligible to retire and leave education in Montana;

BE IT RESOLVED: That SAM supports changes in TRS – 1.) to grant a change from 1.67% to 2% per year rates for retirement occurring after 30 years of creditable service with appropriate funding sources,

2.) to establish an additional funding mechanism to grant retirees the ability to reenter education at up to a full salary without loss of benefits.

Thank you for your consideration of this request to vote for HB338! I would be glad to answer any questions about my testimony!

Sincerely,

Darrell Rud
Executive Director
School Administrators of Montana