

EXHIBIT 4
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SB 98

geodata

**Testimony to the Montana House of Representatives State Administration
Committee Regarding S.B. 98 Montana Land Information Act**

My name is Ken Wall, I am president of Geodata Services, Inc. in Missoula, Montana, a consulting business established 12 years ago in 1993, currently with 8 employees. I am here today in strong support of S.B. 98. The Montana Land Information Act would provide stability to a critical Montana infrastructure that provides a foundation for the business of good government for the people of Montana and tools for wide ranging interests from economic development to conservation of natural resources.

We are currently working on a contract with the Montana Department of Administration and Homeland Security to map critical structures in every county and tribal nation in Montana, police and fire stations, ambulance medical facilities, shelters, emergency operation centers, and more than 150 other map layers, along with the data models and the "glue" that ties these data with other integrated models for transportation, cadastral land ownership, addressing, E911. Effective GIS bridges multiple levels of government from local to federal. Montana is one of the few states in the country with statewide cooperative standards and integrated solutions for this infrastructure, and the envy of many other states. In an increasingly competitive environment for scarce funding, we need to maintain and enhance that leadership. This legislation is a critical part of that process. We are also primarily a rural state, and MLIA will benefit the urban centers and as importantly, I believe it will dramatically improve the abilities of rural counties. Cost/benefit analysis of the statewide cadastral layer show that every dollar invested returns eight dollars in benefits.

Approximately 80% of all business functions have a geographic component, a map, an address, a location, a spatial relationship, and the reach of GIS is extensive. When we work with clients to identify these business practices we start with case studies. I'd like to finish today by giving a few use cases. These are not comprehensive; they are just a sample of the applications of one small business in the last few months alone, contract work using the data and resources that would be supported by MLIA.

* Public safety and wildlife movement areas along more than 1,200 miles of highway in Western Montana and North and Central Idaho with MDFWP and Idaho F&G, MDOT and IDT and 24 land trusts and wildlife groups like the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and private landowners, such as an active local group in Mineral County.

* Election logistics and planning, working with local and state candidates, using the cadastral data and voter records and census and demographic data for campaign strategy, historic voter analysis, yard sign identification and door to door walking lists. Many of you may have already benefited from this technology in your own campaigns. The Help America Vote Act and GIS work planned by

the Secretary of State will enhance these applications.

* Analysis for a DNRC EIS of residential, commercial and industrial growth throughout Montana in relation to every parcel of school trust lands in Montana. Combining the cadastral and property tax data from all 56 Montana counties with commercial and public domain census and economic data, and conducting distance to amenities and distance to services analysis at the regional and local level. We examined overall trends in residential growth and local examination of all trust land parcels for residential development potential.

* Geocoding of employee records and analysis with MarsStout for many of the nations' major supermarket chains in HUD economic empowerment zones.

* Community planning and dynamic web mapping site accessible to homeowners to calculate their Firewise risk assessment, do what if scenarios for community wildfire preparation and emergency preparedness plans and fly over three dimensional views of the fire risk maps and treatments in their community to visualize developments and treatments before the work begins on the ground.

* Improving range productivity and private landowner agreements, prescribed burn strategy, and weed treatments for elk and mule deer habitat and also an economic development web site for businesses of any kind interested in opening and operating in Montana where they enter an address and get a comprehensive market profile, demographic reports, maps and air photos, almost instantly over the Internet.

I don't know of any other field or expenditure that the legislature can make that works so well for government, economic development, and conservation. SB 98 is a win-win for Montanans. I urge you to approve the Montana Land Information Act.

I would also like to introduce a letter co-signed by eleven businesses in Montana who support S.B. 98 and would directly benefit from passage of the legislation. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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