EXHIBIT 7
DATE 1-19-05
HB 301

TESTIMONY OF ART NEILL
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE HEARING
HB301
19JANUARY2005 3:00PM

MR. CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, THANK FOR THIS TIME.

MY NAME IS ART NEILL. I LIVE IN BILLINGS BUT HAVE BEEN ON THE LEWIS & CLARK INTERPRETIVE CENTER FOUNDATION BOARD SINCE 1999.

HB301 WILL BE AN EASY BILL TO ADMINISTER. REVENUE DISTRIBUTION WILL BE SPIT EQUALLY BETWEEN THE THREE LEWIS & CLARK ENTITIES WITHOUT THE NEED FOR ANY GRANT REQUEST PROCEDURE TO BE IN PLACE. ADDITIONALLLY, A PORTION OF THE LICENSE PLATE FEE WILL GO TO THE COUNTIES TO PAY FOR THEIR LICENSE PLATE FEE COLLECTION COSTS AND A PORTION WILL GO TO THE STATE GENERAL FUND TO COVER THE COST OF PRODUCING THE PLATES AND DISTRIBUTING THE FEES.

ALSO, THE THREE FACILITIES WILL BE IN PLACE FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. DISTRIBUTING THE FUNDS EQUITABLY TO THE MAJOR LEWIS & CLARK SITES WILL BEST UTILIZE THE FUTURE LICENSE PLATE REVENUES. ADVERTISEMENT AND PROMOTION OF THESE SITES WILL PRODUCE A BENEFIT FOR MONTANA AND IT'S COUNTIES THROUGH TOURISM AND OTHER TYPES OF VISITS.

FINALLY, MR. CHAIRMAN, I HAVE SPENT TIME AT ALL THREE SITES. THEY ARE A WONDERFUL AND IMPORTANT ASSET AND RESOURCE FOR OUR STATE. THIS BILL WILL HELP THEM TO CONTINUE WITH THEIR IMPORTANT MISSIONS.

THANK YOU----