

Dear Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Energy Committee

My name is Jo Radtke at 426 Cow Creek Road in Drummond, Montana. I am the President of the Rural Sustainability Organization which has successfully brought Universal System Benefits funds to rural Granite County in the form of solar water pumping stations for 14 ranchers to utilize upland grazing pastures, solar hot water on a local wool mill for heating water to wash wool, and brought federal USDA funding to a local saw mill using USB funds as a cost share for a biomass project, where two steam engines offset part of the power consumption at the mill. The USB funds have helped Granite County by boosting the economy of the businesses, allowing the wool mill to increase production and hire additional help, along with giving the saw mill the ability to maintain a second shift and continue to be the largest private employer in Granite County. We continue to look for projects which increase awareness of renewable energy in rural Montana, and provide a benefit for low-income residents.

I ask the Senate Energy Committee to vote yes on Senate Bill 365. I ask the Senate Energy Committee to vote no on Senate Bill 34. I ask the Senate Energy Committee to vote yes on Senate Bill 371. I ask the Senate Energy Committee to vote yes on Senate Bill 307.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jo Radtke