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Date 3-3-05  
March 3, 2005 HB 197

*Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,*

*For the record my name is Colette Gray,  
I am a Board Member for the Cascade County Chapter for the  
Prevention of Elder Abuse.*

*I am here today to urge you to pass HB 197.*

*In Montana, because our census contains an older population we are  
more likely to encounter the problems associated with the elderly and their  
treatment as our population ages.*

*Many people are living longer and staying in their homes for as long  
as they are able to do so. As this happens some people are not able to do all  
of the daily tasks they once did for themselves. These vulnerable people have  
to rely on others to help them through their daily lives. The number of truly  
wonderful people and agencies who fill this unmet need has had to increase  
with the need and at the same time the potential for neglect, abuse and  
exploitation rises as the needs arise.*

*Elder abuse happens more than most people are aware of because it  
is a highly unreported crime. Most victims of these crimes are either  
isolated, mentally or physically limited in their ability to report or are  
ashamed to let people know that they have become a victim.*

*Through public awareness at the local level of the growing problem  
and stronger laws that bring the perpetrators to justice, our state will be  
able to combat this problem.*

*This bill is a good first step.*

*Thank you,  
Colette Gray*



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