

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



JUDY MARTZ, GOVERNOR

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November 29, 2004

Minkie Medora
Chair, Food Policy Council
Montana Food Bank Network
5652 Expressway
Missoula, MT 59808

SENATE PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY

EXHIBIT NO. 7

DATE: 1-14-05

BILL NO. SB 29

Re: Letter of support for LC0031

Dear Mrs. Medora:

As the Director of the Department of Corrections, I would like to support the legislation to return food stamp and TANF benefits to individuals that have been convicted of a felony of possession, use, or distribution of a controlled substance. I also support repealing the current lifetime ban on these benefits.

It is important that ex-offenders be able to receive these benefits, as it often is the difference between failure and a successful reintegration back into the community, especially while trying to support a family. I do believe that the needed assistance they can receive from these programs will help to keep them from re-offending. I understand that offenders need to be held accountable for their crimes, but by not allowing these benefits, we often punish their children.

Sincerely,


Bill Slaughter
Director