SENATE PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY
EXHIBIT NO. 1
DATE: 3-16-05
BILL NO. HB 457
COPY

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AN ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

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March 14, 2005

Sen. Brent Cromley, Chair
Senate Committee on Public Health, Welfare and Safety
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Sen. Cromley:

Due to a scheduling conflict, I was unable to testify at Friday's committee hearing on HB 457, but I want to inform you that MHA strongly supports this bill.

As I'm sure you heard during the testimony, it is often extremely difficult to meet the need for radiological services in Montana's rural and frontier communities. Staffing shortages and the great distances between rural communities pose severe challenges to our efforts to ensure access to radiological services.

Radiologist Assistants and Radiology Practitioner Assistants were established as a way to help fill this need. These individuals are licensed radiologic technologists with two years of additional training, which allows them to perform routine radiology procedures and assist the radiologist in providing care.

HB 457 would enable hospitals and other health care providers to use these skills more effectively.

I understand that the American College of Radiology has expressed some concern about HB 457. It is important to note that this bill is a Montana solution to Montana's unique geographic situation. Access to radiology procedures in rural communities would be threatened without our continued ability to use Radiologist Assistants and Radiology Practitioner Assistants.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John W. Flink, Vice President

1720 Ninth Avenue P.O. Box 5119
Helena, Montana 59604-5119
tel: 406-442-1911 fax: 443-3894
www.mtha.org