



SENATE STATE ADMIN.

EXHIBIT NO. 1
DATE 1.19.05
BILL NO. SB182

January 19, 2005

Senator Carolyn Squires
Room 355 State Capitol Building
Helena MT 59601

Support of SB 182: Counting of Absentee ballots by deceased voters

Chairwomen Squires and members of the Committee:

Madame Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Marilyn Lemm a volunteer advocate for AARP Montana.

AARP is a non-profit, non-partisan membership organization with more than 143,000 Montana members in Montana. Our members, like many Montanans, highly value their right to vote and expect that once they have cast a ballot, including an absentee ballot, their vote will be counted. National statistics from voter turn out in 2000 demonstrate that seniors appreciate their right to vote: over 66% of those aged 55 to 64 voted; for the 65 to 74 age group it was almost 70%.

We see no rationale for discounting an absentee ballot because someone has died. In respect to a person's last ballot cast, please give this bill a Do Pass recommendation.