2-15-05

SENATE TAXATION
EXHIBIT NO 9
DATE 2-15-05
BILL NO SB 272

To: Members of the Montana State Senate Tax Committee
From: John Myers
2210 38th St. Missoula, MT 59801

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 272. A small graduated tax on retail sales above twenty million dollars would be a good idea because the large, almost entirely out-of-state corporations that own these stores do not presently pay a fair share of Montana taxes. Unlike other businesses, retail stores have a relatively small amount of equipment that can be taxed under the business equipment tax, which is the primary business tax in Montana. Yet these stores make a tremendous amount of profit in Montana, most of which is shipped out of Montana to corporate headquarters and owners and stockholders located elsewhere.

In addition the bill provides exceptions for businesses that pay living wages, provide certain benefits, or hire a larger percentage of full time workers. This will allow businesses to reduce their taxes when they contribute to a higher quality of life for their Montana workers.

The people of Montana need a source of revenue to help restore the safety net of social programs that has been so drastically lowered in these last few years. These extremely profitable, mostly out-of-state corporations should pay their fair share.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinions.

Respectfully Yours,

John Myers