



## — Montana Office of Public Instruction

EXHIBIT 5  
DATE 2/2/07  
HB 13

Linda McCulloch  
State Superintendent

HB 13 (Sesso) – State Pay Plan  
Friday, February 2, 2007  
House Appropriations Committee  
State Superintendent Linda McCulloch Remarks

For the record, I am Linda McCulloch, Montana's Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Thank you, Representative Sesso, for sponsoring HB 13, the state pay plan bill to honor the negotiated agreement among the unions representing our state employees and Governor Schweitzer.

As Montana's State Superintendent, I know that our most important government resource is our state employees. It is their efforts that keep our communities safe, whether it's the incarceration of criminals in our state prisons or maintaining safety on our Montana highways.

They also care for our parents, grandparents, and neighbors in our community nursing homes.

They draft your bills, write your fiscal notes, and guide you through this legislative process during this 90 day session.

And, dear to my heart, they are the folks who distribute funds to our school districts, accredit our schools, license almost 25,000 educators to teach in Montana, and administer federal programs that supplement state and local funds to our schools. And much, much more.

Elected officials like you and me will come and go, but theirs are the faces that are constant in our state government, making sure Montanans are properly served, day in and day out.

HB 13 gives state employees a well-deserved and reasonable pay increase and also solidifies the state's transition to the market-based Broadband Pay Plan. The Broadband Pay Plan also allows state agencies to compete for and retain quality, experienced staff to do the work of Montana's government.

The Office of Public Instruction successfully transitioned to the Broadband Pay Plan in June 2006. Adopting the Broadband Pay Plan gave us the flexibility to address pay-related recruitment and retention problems with market-based pay for our agency occupations. With nearly half of the OPI employees eligible to retire in the next 5 years, recruitment and retention is a significant concern.

We set the entry rate for new employees at 80% of the market rate and our average agency market ratio is still only 90%. HB 13 helps us move closer to the market rate with an annual across-the-board 3% increase for the OPI staff. It also allows us to adjust some of the pay inequities with the agency discretionary .6% appropriation.

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I offer my sincere thanks to our state employees who give 110% and more serving the people of Montana. This is the time to show respect for their dedication to our state.

Please pass HB 13 as written, to honor the agreement between the state employees and Governor Schweitzer.

Thank you for your time today!