



January 17, 2007

House Human Services Committee
RE: HB 148

EXHIBIT 6
DATE 1-17-07
HB 148

Chairman Ron Stoker,

Chairman Stoker and members of the committee,

My name is Jim Carlson. I am director of Environmental Health at the Missoula City-County Health Department. I am speaking on behalf of the Missoula Health Department and the Health Department directors of Missoula, Yellowstone, Gallatin, Flathead, Lewis and Clark, Silver Bow, and Cascade Counties.

House Bill 148 would raise the fees for swimming pool licensure to cover the actual costs of the inspection and compliance programs. Currently Missoula County does not inspect its pools and spas because the license program generates inadequate fees.

Missoula County has a population of 52 facilities that contain 93 pools and spas requiring a license. Under the current fee schedule these licenses generate \$3,125 dollars per year in revenue. If Missoula County were to take over the inspection and compliance program from the State, we would get 85% of the fee money which would be \$2,656 dollars per year. However, our costs for conducting the inspection and compliance program are projected to be \$11,875 dollars per year. Under the current fee structure we would loose approximately \$9,219 and assume added liability for assuming the pool program. We simply can't afford to take on this program under the current fees structure. This bill would increase the fees collected in Missoula County to \$12,950 per year and Missoula would be eligible for 85% equaling \$11,007 if we choose to take over the program. I can tell you that if this bill passes as drafted, we will recommend to our board to take over the pool program in Missoula County.

The underlying public health reason for this program is vital to our mission of protecting the public health. Pools can be the source of infection of many diseases including ear infections, cryptosporidium, giardia, and many other diarrhea illness. Spas are often a source of skin infections and can be a source of legionnaire's disease and some of its close relatives.

In the past few years Missoula has experienced outbreaks involving pools and spas. We would like to have better response and control over these situations. Please make local control and more timely response a financial option for the counties. Please pass HB 148 as drafted.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Carlson, R.S
Director of Environmental Health