

Exhibit No. 2

Date 2-20-07

Bill No. SB-496

SENATE BILL 496

SB 496 is before you because people in western Montana are very concerned about what the escalating real estate values are going to do to their tax responsibility when the new cyclical appraisal takes place.

SB 496 is a constitutional amendment which would protect them from sky rocketing real estate prices when largely out of state buyers pay outlandish prices for Montana property. This constitutional amendment was put to the voters in Montana several years ago. Because of a well orchestrated media campaign and general misunderstanding by the public it did not pass, There however are those among us who believe because of changing circumstances that this is a protection for property owners whose time has come, and I urge your support.

Most of us want to enact some kind of meaningful help for our taxpayers and there are measures before this legislature to do just that, but I believe none of them offers the genuine on-going relief found in this proposal.

Checking with a North County realtor this past week I learned that the average cost per acre paid during the last 3-6 months is \$12,000. In the Libby end of the county an individual seeking to acquire a small place for his family reported that land is going for \$15-20,000 unless it has an excellent view-waterfront etc.. That property is starting at \$ 50,000 and up. In adjacent Flathead County 1-2 acre lots are going for \$ 15-20,000.

In our county the average income is \$ 19,790 There is no way the elderly and people on fixed income can cope when the new appraisals go into effect.

Our unemployment rate is always the highest or among the highest in the state.

If there are those of you troubled by a potential revenue impact, I respectfully request that you give consideration to amending this to be applicable to year round residential homes only.