

EXHIBIT

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DATE

1/10/09

HB

212

Butte Emergency Food Bank
1019 E. Second Street
Butte, MT 59701

Chairman Sesso and members of the Committee,

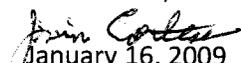
I'm Jim Cortese (spell it), co-director of the Butte Emergency Food Bank. I speak in favor of HB 212. My wife and I have served as co-directors of the Butte Emergency Food Bank for over 6 years.

At the Butte Emergency Food Bank – and likely at ALL food pantries in MT – we are caught between two pressures. We are an all-volunteer organization; NO salaries are paid. ALL income from donations is used to purchase food and personal care products and keep our doors open. The related pressure is the increasing costs of food. For example, in 2006, the food purchase expense at the Butte Food Bank was \$54,000. In 2008, the expense was \$115,000.

The second pressure is the increased number of clients needing food. At present, we supply about 25% of what a household needs for one month. As a result of increased costs and increased clients, we may need to reduce the amount of food distributed.

Your support of HB 212 would drastically ease these pressures. I urge your support of HB 212.

Jim Cortese, co-Director


January 16, 2009