

**MONTANA**  
Department of Commerce

EXHIBIT 6  
DATE 3/6/09  
HB 2

MONTANA PROMOTION DIVISION  
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March 2, 2009

Dear Chairman Sesso and House Appropriations Committee Members:

The Tourism Advisory Council (TAC) is a gubernatorially appointed council of tourism related representatives whose focus is helping to maintain a healthy industry in the state of Montana. The TAC represents Montana's tourism interests and asks that you please vote in support of any motion for increases in State Parks and Fishing Access Site (FAS) FTE that would amend House Bill 2.

Montana's second largest industry is tourism at \$3 billion annually. State Parks and fishing access sites help support the tourism industry by taking care of that part of Montana tourists come to experience. FTE used to staff parks and access sites are not funded with general fund money and are front line personnel who serve customers directly, much like those you find working in a hotel or restaurant.

In 2002, the University of Montana completed an economic impact survey of state parks. Non-resident state park visitors had a positive economic impact of more than \$81 million to community economies. That same survey showed that the parks system generated \$23.3 million in personal income to Montanan's and 1,170 jobs were created.

The park system has made significant improvements statewide, and the tourism industry has benefited from better services and facilities provided by having a healthy park system. State Parks is a good partner and works effectively throughout the state to help us build healthy local businesses and make Montana's guests feel welcome while enjoying their visit.

The TAC feels that an investment in State Parks and FAS staffing is a good one for our industry. Please support any amendment to expand park and FAS staffing in House Bill 2.

Feel free to contact me if you have further questions 406-228-9336. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Stan Ozark, Chair  
Tourism Advisory Council