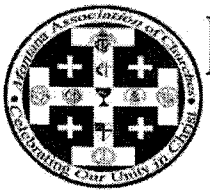
EXHIBIT 2
DATE 1-29-09
SB 360



Montana Association of Churches

Uniting by the power of God's word for witness and worship, justice and service

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MAC IS AN ECUMENICAL ASSOCIATION REPRESENTING 10 DEMONINATIONAL UNITS AND OVER 1200 INDIVIDUAL CHURCHES ACROSS MONTANA. FOR THE PAST 35 YEARS WE HAVE WORKED TOGETHER ON SEVERAL DIRECTIVES. ONE OF THESE DIRECTIVES IS TO:
WITNESS TO JUSTICE and advocate in the public arena for systemic, economic, environmental and international justice and provide resources for member churches to work for the common good to engage social justice issues in local settings.

MAC 2009 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Position Statement

The Montana Association of Churches supports policies and efforts to advance economic justice in Montana, consistent with the following principles:

- All people are made in God's image.
- All people have a responsibility toward family, the broader society, and creation. All people have a right to secure the basic necessities of life.
- All people have the right to economic opportunities, meaningful and useful work, and just wages and benefits.
- Ethical values shape economic justice.
- A fundamental measure of any economy is how the poor and economically vulnerable are faring.
- Policies and decisions on investment, trade and development should protect human life, promote human rights, and ensure a sustainable future for the planet.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Position Statement

The Montana Association of Churches opposes capital punishment and calls upon the Montana Legislature to abolish the death penalty.

CARING IN CREATION

Position Statement

The Montana Association of Churches affirms and supports:

- Humanity's responsibility to care in and for creation;
- The recognition that land ownership is not absolute, but a sacred trust given by God from the past for the present and the future;
- Economic vitality linked to social justice and environmental sustainability;
- Protection of land, air and water through laws and policies that phase in prohibitions against the discharge of harmful emissions and effluents;
- Restoration of air, land, and water quality whenever disrupted by harmful environmental practices;
- Sensitivity to the traditional values of American Indians concerning land use; and
- Assessment of the environmental impacts of alterations to Montana's ecosystem using scientific data gathering procedures.

We call upon all citizens, corporations, and our governmental representatives to seek ways to safeguard the quality of the air, land and water which we and our descendants need to live healthy lives and to have productive employment.

HEALTH CARE SYSTEM REFORM

Position Statement

The Montana Association of Churches supports health care system reforms at the state and national levels that will:

- Grant universal access to affordable health care benefits, including access to primary and acute health care, dental, visual and hearing care, immunization services, early diagnostic and treatment programs, prescription medicines, provider and consumer education, programs of extended care and rehabilitation, mental health and health and wellness promotion.
- Provide "a wide range of coordinated services to enable older Montanans to: Maintain an independent lifestyle, avoid unnecessary institutional care, and live in dignity." (Montana Older Americans Act, 1987 Legislature).
- Give the same rights and opportunities to persons with HIV/AIDS as to persons with other serious communicable diseases.[i]
- Reduce costs of health care through the elimination of unnecessary administrative costs and the promotion of health education and preventive care.

Recognizing that overall systemic reform may take years to accomplish, the Montana Association of Churches supports intermediate steps, such as the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and programs to reduce the cost of prescription medicine. Given our State's uniquely rural character and vast size, such intermediate steps can increase access to basic health care for many Montanans, especially for children and other vulnerable people.