



SENATE AGRICULTURE
EXHIBIT NO. 5
DATE 2-18-2009
BILL NO. SB 337

February 17, 2009

**Testimony opposing SB 337,
An Act prohibiting the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
from relocating wild buffalo or bison as a result
of the state-federal bison quarantine feasibility study.**

Mr. Chair and committee members, my name is Carolyn Duckworth, and I live in Gardiner, Montana. I am the President of Bear Creek Council, whose 75 members live near the bison quarantine facility.

We know that the wildlife professionals who manage this facility have taken every precaution to keep these bison safe and to protect the surrounding private landowners, some of whom keep livestock. We also know that this project has significantly advanced wildlife and livestock management science.

We also know that throughout the development phases, which were completely public and open to comment, the state and federal agencies clearly stated the final outcome of this quarantine research was relocating the bison to tribes and other interested public parties.

Furthermore, we believe SB 337 is not good for the state of Montana because:

- Its lack of faith in APHIS protocols will throw the safety practices of the state's livestock industry into question.
- It identifies Montana as a state that does not believe scientific research is a sound basis for management.
- Its anti-bison stance will give the state of Montana yet another black eye in bison management.
- This stance, by perpetuating a negative view of our state nationwide, directly threatens Montana businesses that depend on tourism.

Therefore, Bear Creek Council's members believe the committee is putting Montana's livestock and tourism industries at risk by advancing this bill. We ask you to kill this bad bill now, in committee.

Respectively submitted by
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