



M O N T A N A
COALITION AGAINST
DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL
V I O L E N C E

January 27th, 2009

To: Senate Judiciary Committee
From: Kelsen Young, Executive Director
Re: SB 230 – Revise laws on criminal contempt

SENATE JUDICIARY

EXHIBIT NO. 6

DATE 1/27/09

BILL NO. SB230

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. For the record, my name is Kelsen Young and I am the Executive Director of the Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. We are a statewide membership organization representing direct service programs from across the state that provide services to victims of domestic and sexual violence. We support Senate Bill 230 sponsored by Senator Perry.

As explained in testimony by other proponents, the changes to existing law that are included in SB 230 would give the criminal justice system the necessary tools to hold offenders accountable throughout the duration of their sentence. Those tools were weakened by the recent Supreme Court case of City of Billings v. Letasky.

This bill would make it a criminal contempt offense to violate a condition of release or suspended sentence. This change is very important in regards to domestic violence offenders, many of whom are on a suspended sentence or conditional release. This will allow for a more immediate response by law enforcement as opposed to what is currently available to criminal justice officials given the Supreme Court ruling.

We support the testimony of Missoula City Attorney Judy Wang and other proponents. We ask that you support SB 230. I am unable to be at the hearing this morning, but will be available for further questions in the future. Thank you.

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