

EXHIBIT: 7
DATE: 2/1/11
#



118 E. Seventh St.; Suite 2A Anaconda, MT 59711
ph: 406.563.5259 fx: 406.563.5476
<http://www.medamembers.org>

MEDA represents over 230 members who are actively involved in local economic activity, community development, job retention and job creation for Montana.

February 1, 2011

**TO: Bill Beck , Chair, and the House Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government;
Rm. 350**

Re: Dept. of Labor and Industry, Incumbent Worker Training Grant Program

MEDA strongly supports program and financial support for the purpose of incumbent worker training. For several years, MEDA has operated the highly successful Montana Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) program which strengthens local companies and enhances a community's business climate. It is a fact that business expansion and retention is an important part of the economic development process. The most growth, wealth creation and expansion capabilities exist within our homegrown businesses that were conceived, incubated and grown in Montana. These are the businesses the BEAR program targets working in conjunction with the Incumbent Worker Training Program.

The Montana BEAR Program was an entry vehicle for the Incumbent Worker Training Grant Pilot Program which proved to be successful and met many existing needs of Montana business owners. The 2009 Legislature funded the program and utilized BEAR, Montana Manufacturing Extension Center and MDOC/Small Business Development Centers as access vehicles for the application process.

From April 2010 to January 2011, over 476 workers received training that built and enhanced skills. The quick pace with which this funding was accessed demonstrates the need for this support for Montana's small business employers.

With your support, this program will continue to meet the need of incumbent worker training statewide and meet the needs of business owners in Montana.

Thank you for your support for incumbent worker training.

Sincerely,

Jim Davison, President
MEDA

Gloria O'Rourke, Coordinator
MT BEAR Program

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January 31, 2011

Dear Chairman Beck and members of the House Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government;

My name is Francis Scherman and I am the owner of Timberline Fencing located in Butte. We have recently expanded our fencing manufacturing business in Butte into a newly constructed facility. This growth in our business was brought about by our expanding into the manufacturing of chain link and vinyl fencing material. In doing so we have purchased specialized equipment that required additional space in which to operate.

When I was putting together the financing to construct my new facility and purchase the manufacturing equipment I worked very closely with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Headwaters RC&D. It is my understanding that funding for both the SBDC and the Certified Regional Development Centers such as Headwaters RC&D are being examined. As a small business person working in Montana, I greatly appreciate all the assistance both the SBDC and Headwaters RC&D provided me. With their guidance I was able to obtain financing and grow my business.

Additionally, the new chain link weaving and double-head router machines I installed required my staff to be trained in its operation. I worked with the Butte Business Retention and Expansion (BEAR) team to submit two applications to the Incumbent Worker Training program. This program allowed me to afford the specialized training for my operators and thus fully utilize the new machines production capabilities. Without the training program the cost of bring in the factory representatives to train my staff would have put a great financial burden on my new operation. By partnering with the state in the training cost with the state I was able to greatly increase the productivity of my staff and successfully compete for work throughout the state and region.

As a taxpayer and small business person I fully realize that the legislature is operating under a tight budget. One of the main themes I have heard from the legislature is to help business create new jobs and expand the economy. As our business grows I fully intend to hire more workers. I strongly encourage you to fund these programs so that many other small businesses can get the assistance I did and be successful.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Francis Scherman
Owner, Timberline Fencing
115 South Parkmont St.
Butte, MT 59701



STILLWATER COUNTY

Stillwater County Economic Development

Melissa Kramer, Coordinator

PO Box 881
Phone: (406) 322-8050

809 E. 4th Ave. N Suite C.
Fax: (406) 322-1118

Columbus, MT 59019
Email: mkramer@stillwater.mt.gov

January 31, 2011

TO: **Bill Beck**, Chair, and the House Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government; Rm. 350

I am writing this letter in support of the Montana Department of Labor & Industry's budget for Incumbent Worker Training. Incumbent Worker Training has been a significant driver in business owners taking proactive measures to ensure the perpetual viability of their business. The program has allowed businesses to train their workers in varying aspects of their business with trainings suited to their needs.

The Incumbent Worker Training Grant Program has been a sound program that fundamentally puts the funding directly into the hands of our small town rural business owners and operators to utilize in the growth and expansion of their businesses that serve our communities. Stillwater County businesses have collectively benefitted from approximately \$48,000 in grant funding since the inception of the program. This program is vital to our rural business communities.

I strongly urge you to continue this program in the Montana Department of Labor and Industry budget.

Sincerely,

Melissa Kramer



February 1, 2011

TO: Gloria O'Rourke, BEAR program

Re: Dept. of Labor and Industry, Incumbent Worker Training Grant Program

I am responding to your request regarding the IWT program. I joined Flathead Job Service in March 2010 after a 31 Year career in Banking. Because of my experience in working with business, our manager Mr. Bill Nelson gave me the opportunity to work with the BEAR program starting in August 2010. I have now conducted 29 BEAR Interviews in the Flathead in these past 6 months.

We have had a very warm reception to the IWT program as a result of the BEAR interviews and are proud of the numbers of employees we have provided opportunities to hone their job skills and increase their value to the businesses they represent. However in my experience with my first 29 interviews, the IWT program was the "hot button" to get employers to invite me to their business. The dollars that we have expended in the training program pale in comparison to the other services we have provided once we conduct the Interview and find out what challenges these small business owners are facing.

For example, I recently worked with an owner of a Real Estate company that was closing with offices in Kalispell and Whitefish. They were laying off the office staff and had at least one exceptional secretary with a phenomenal business background. The following week, I was invited to conduct a BEAR visit with a Laundry business. She wanted to discuss IWT and shared with me that she was going to sell her business as she was losing her drive and was not sure how to grow the business. In the end, I introduced her to the displaced Real Estate person, we were able to place her under the OJT program and pay 90% of her salary for 6 months, and the new team is once again excited about business and working on a marketing plan to renew the energy and grow the business.

I cannot overstate the value of IWT in getting me in the door. Once we visit for one hour I find that without exception the businesses do not have a: Business Plan, Safety Plan, Employee Handbook, Marketing Plan. In most cases I am able to make referrals to our BEAR partners to put these programs in place. I recommend up to 50% of them to Montana West Economic Development for some form of financing, and the Business Plan is the first thing they need to apply. I have referred several to apply for Trade Show Assistance programs available for them to attend Trade Shows. I have referred others to USDA program to assist them with grants and loans to make improvements to their energy consumption. Still others are sent to our person at the chamber who helps businesses obtain Government contracts. Some, I only send notices that classes are available regarding marketing, wage and hour, and hiring employees. I estimate that I have referred a dozen new job postings to our own Job Service Office as a direct result of the visits.

I could not have attained this success without IWT. I am sure that we will have more requests for IWT, and all of the other programs in 2011 just due to the volume of business I am contacting. Many of the contacts come from my prior career as a banker, but now I am receiving referrals from the businesses we have helped, our own Job Service staff is excited about all the businesses we are assisting, and the success is breeding further success.

As a banker / businessman in this community for over 30 years, I can tell you that the money spent to help businesses prosper and encourage their employees by far outweighs paying unemployment claims for those businesses that do not succeed. As you are aware some portion of our economic success has to do with "attitudes". I can clearly see, as with my Laundry owner, that we are changing attitudes --- in the proper direction. When we train employees with IWT funds, the message to the employee is that they have value and the intent is to keep them rather than lay them off.

Sincerely,

Michael M. Jackson
Flathead Job Service
MT BEAR Program

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February 1, 2011

**TO: Bill Beck , Chair, and the House Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government;
Rm. 350**

Re: Dept. of Labor and Industry, Incumbent Worker Training Grant Program

On behalf of small businesses in Montana, I am writing this letter in support of the Montana Department of Labor & Industry's budget for Incumbent Worker Training. It is a successful program that has earned its right to be retained.

Cream of the West's owners and employees have all benefitted from the training provided by this program. As a result of trainings attended, we have added 30 new Montana-grown organic products to our line, have instituted food manufacturing safety measures and have begun tracking our inventory electronically. Training opportunities such as these, while essential to staying in business, are often bypassed because they strain the budgets of small businesses.

Healthy Montana businesses are Montana's home-grown stimulus package. Keeping them here and helping them thrive is what the Incumbent Worker Training Program is all about. It's worth keeping!

Thank you for your support for incumbent worker training.

Sincerely,

Alicia Moe

Alicia Moe
Owner, General Manager
CREAM OF THE WEST
100 year Montana Tradition

CREAM OF THE WEST
Harlowton, Montana
cotw@mtintouch.net
1-800-477-2383
www.creamofthewest.com



February 1, 2011

**TO: Bill Beck , Chair, and the House Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government;
Rm. 350**

Re: Dept. of Labor and Industry, Incumbent Worker Training Grant Program

On behalf of the statewide Montana BEAR Program, I am writing this letter in support of the Montana Department of Labor & Industry's budget for Incumbent Worker Training.

Since 2006, a unique partnership including Montana Economic Developers Association, Montana Department of Commerce, the Governor's Office of Economic Development, Montana Department of Labor and over 78 Outreach Specialists have worked together to coordinate the highly successful Montana Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) program.

The Montana BEAR Program strives to meet the needs of business owners so that businesses can stay in Montana, grow and expand. The Montana Department of Labor and Industry, in particular Job Service Center staff, has played a key role in the success of this program. We partner on a variety of levels including making contacts with key businesses that would benefit from the program, interviewing business owners to learn of workforce, training, financial and educational needs and finally, to make referrals and follow-up with the business owner to initiate changes for success.

Thanks to funding HB388, the 2009 Legislature enacted the Incumbent Worker Training Grant Program to meet the documented demand employers had for incumbent worker training. Just from April 2010 to January 2011, over 476 workers and 206 businesses have received assistance and/or training from this program. Access to the program is provided by BEAR, Montana Manufacturing Extension Center and MDOC/Small Business Development Centers. Over two dozen counties had businesses that participated in the grant program.

It is a fact that business expansion and retention is an important part of the economic development process. *The most growth, wealth creation and expansion capabilities exist within our homegrown businesses that were conceived, incubated and grown in Montana.*

The attached 2010 Annual Report details the success of the BEAR and IWTG program in reaching the needs of Montana's business employers.

Thank you for your support for incumbent worker training.

Sincerely,

MT BEAR Program

118 E. Seventh St.; Suite 2A
Anaconda, MT 59711
Ph: 406.563.5259 Fx: 406.563.5476
gloria@medamembers.org

BEAR

montana business expansion and retention

The Montana Bear Program is a partnership with the Governor's Office of Economic Development, Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Department of Labor, ExecutivePulse and Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA).

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2010

The Montana BEAR Program is all about outreach, building relationships and providing resources to strengthen Montana businesses. The information that follows is a summary of the activities of Montana's outstanding business, expansion and retention team.

2010: IMPLEMENTATION OF INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING GRANT PROGRAM

In a great example of how the results from BEAR visits coupled with data collection through ExecutivePulse can change the course of Economic Development legislation, the 2009 Legislature created and funded a new Incumbent Worker Training Program to help Montana's small businesses. Using data from ExecutivePulse collected over the first three years of Montana's BEAR Project those who testified at the legislature were able to demonstrate that more than 90 percent of business interviewed identified incumbent worker training as their greatest need.

The program, as it has emerged from the legislature, is based on the highly effective Incumbent Worker Training Pilot Project conducted by the BEAR Teams in Billings, Livingston, and Lewistown in 2008-2009.

The legislature funded the program with more than \$600,000 annually over the biennium and identified BEAR teams, Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) and Montana Manufacturing Extension Centers (MMEC) as entry points for grant applications.

Due to a lengthy rules process, the funding provided was not able to be accessed until April 2010. Even with this shortened time span, the demand for funds was obvious as applications flowed in from Montana's small business employers. Under the IWT Program small Montana businesses may apply for up to \$2000 per worker for training which will increase wages and productivity and help to guarantee continued employment. The grants are available for established businesses with less than 20 employees in any single location and not more than 50 employees state-wide.

David Morey provided the following data on IWTG progress from April 16, 2010 to January 18, 2011.

Summary and Analysis

- 476 workers/206 businesses = 2.3 workers per business
- \$438,493.88/206 businesses = \$2128.61 per business
- \$438,493.88/476 workers = \$921.21 per worker

<u>Grants awarded by county</u>		<u>Number of workers trained per county:</u>		<u>Grant amounts per county:</u>	
YELLOWSTONE	61	YELLOWSTONE	159	YELLOWSTONE	\$133,740.47
FLATHEAD	24	MISSOULA	71	MISSOULA	108,499.01
MISSOULA	22	FLATHEAD	48	FLATHEAD	40,211.76
RAVALLI	18	RAVALLI	37	RAVALLI	25,953.05
STILLWATER	10	STILLWATER	24	STILLWATER	25,118.98
LAKE	10	SILVER BOW	22	SILVER BOW	17,449.00
GALLATIN	8	LAKE	21	LAKE	14,926.74
ROOSEVELT	7	GALLATIN	16	GRANITE	11,860.00
SILVER BOW	6	SHERIDAN	14	GALLATIN	9866.65
DEER LODGE	6	DEER LODGE	13	DEER LODGE	9613.96
SHERIDAN	5	GRANITE	9	GLACIER	9361

RICHLAND	4	WHEATLAND	9	LEWIS AND CLARK	8121.56
PARK	4	LEWIS AND CLARK	7	WHEATLAND	4652
LEWIS AND CLARK	4	GLACIER	5	PARK	3566.42
WHEATLAND	3	ROOSEVELT	5	CARBON	3372.66
POWELL	2	JUDITH BASIN	5	SANDERS	2947
JUDITH BASIN	2	PARK	4	SHERIDAN	2843.5
GRANITE	2	POWELL	2	ROOSEVELT	2810
GLACIER	2	SANDERS	2	FERGUS	1481
VALLEY	1	CARBON	2	JUDITH BASIN	1227.12
SANDERS	1	FERGUS	1	POWELL	872
LINCOLN	1	TOTAL	476	TOTAL	\$438,493.88
FERGUS	1				
CASCADE	1				
CARBON	1				
TOTAL	206				

2010 BEAR ROUNDUP

Due to restricted travel budgets, the MEDA BEAR Working Group felt it would be best to hold a webinar instead of a face-to-face Montana BEAR Roundup as in the past. While the networking was missing as well as sharing "what works" stories, the information gleaned in the hour and a half webinar, held November 15th, was practical and thorough. The webinar was hosted by Payne Financial. Over 40 BEAR Team members joined the call and learned about Incumbent Worker Training Grant Program updates from Dave Morey, MDLI; "Resources for Assisting Small Businesses with Change in Health Care Laws" from Gina Reilly, Payne Financial; and "Getting More from ExecutivePulse for your Region", Laith Wardi.

2010 DATA FROM MONTANA'S STATEWIDE BEAR PROGRAM

NEW SURVEY INSTRUMENT

In 2010, the MEDA BEAR Working Group re-constructed the retention survey tool for Montana's businesses. The new survey encourages conversation, collects important data and is streamlined for efficient information gathering.

OUTREACH STATISTICS

Montana BEAR Teams reached out during tough economic times to support and retain businesses in Montana. In 2010, 205 businesses were interviewed and assessed. The chart below right details the number of visits since the program's inception in 2006.

205 BUSINESS VISITS in 2010

<u>MONTH, YEAR</u>	<u>VISITS</u>
January 2010	8
February 2010	9
March 2010	11
April 2010	34
May 2010	32
June 2010	15
July 2010	17
August 2010	14
September 2010	24
October 2010	16
November 2010	15
December 2010	10
2010 VISITS	205

1,041 YEARLY VISITS TO DATE

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>VISIT</u>
2006	142
2007	233
2008	275
2009	186
2010	205
Total to date:	1,041

Outreach Visits across Montana by Region:

Eastern – 6, North Central – 7, South Central – 78, Southwest – 41, West – 73

Outreach Visits by County Comparisons 2008, 2009, 2010:

2008 Counties	Visits	2009 Counties	Visits	2010 Counties	Visits
Flathead County	12	Flathead County	36	Flathead County	27
Yellowstone County	81	Yellowstone County	49	Yellowstone County	49
Butte/Silver Bow	35	Butte/Silver Bow	10	Butte/Silver Bow	19
Anaconda Deer Lodge	3	Anaconda Deer Lodge	1	Anaconda Deer Lodge	4
Cascade County	46	Cascade County	12	Cascade County	2
Park County	12	Park County	7	Park County	13
Wheatland County	1	Wheatland County	1	Wheatland County	0
Musselshell County	0	Musselshell County	0	Musselshell County	1
Missoula County	4	Missoula County	4	Missoula County	23
Ravalli County	24	Ravalli County	9	Ravalli County	16
Mineral County	0	Mineral County	0	Mineral County	0
Lincoln County	5	Lincoln County	2	Lincoln County	2
Lake County	6	Lake County	1	Lake County	5
Fergus County	1	Fergus County	8	Fergus County	5
Hill County	3	Hill County	7	Hill County	0
Judith Basin County	1	Judith Basin County	0	Judith Basin County	0
Choteau County	1	Choteau County	0	Choteau County	0
Big Horn County	1	Big Horn County	3	Big Horn County	0
Carbon County	8	Carbon County	4	Carbon County	7
Stillwater County	15	Stillwater County	9	Stillwater County	8
Sweet Grass County	1	Sweet Grass County	2	Sweet Grass County	0
Broadwater County	1	Broadwater County	1	Broadwater County	2
Gallatin County	3	Gallatin County	11	Gallatin County	6
Lewis and Clark County	1	Lewis and Clark County	2	Lewis and Clark County	5
	New in 2009:	Dawson County	1	Dawson County	0
		Roosevelt County	1	Roosevelt County	1
		Sheridan County	1	Sheridan County	1
		Valley County	3	Valley County	0
		Phillips County	1	Phillips County	0
		New in 2010:		Richland County	4
				Granite County	4
				Jefferson County	1

The Montana BEAR Program has outstanding Outreach Specialists who are the heart of the program and make the face-to-face contact with a business.

Outreach Specialist	Records	Outreach Specialist	Records	Outreach Specialist	Records
Axtell, Nancy	2	Graetz, Kara	4	Meyers, Jessica	8
Bailey, Kathie	1	Harden, Warren	2	Michels, PhD, P.E., C.P.L., Joe	1
Bakke, Gary	1	Hardy, Barbara	1	Mohn, Shawn	2
Bennert, Tammy	3	Hartman, Kendall	14	Moody, Kathy	1
Bertolino, Joel	6	Haueter, Terri	1	Morisaki, Kim	3
Betley, Zanya	12	Helvik, Rebecca	1	Morrison, Michael D.	1
Bretz, Dustin	1	Hintz, Lorene	2	Mousley, Heather	16
Burch, Susie	1	Hughes, Mike	2	Myhre, Terry	1
Cortright, Shirley	2	Jackson, Mike	23	Nicholson, Bill	1

Cunningham, Carol	1	Jaksha, Julie	1	O'Rourke, Gloria	13
Davison, Jim	2	Jiang, Deborah	4	O'Rourke, Mike	2
Detrick, Dale	4	Jones, Roy	3	Ohman, Marilyn	1
Dews, Richard	1	Judd, Vicki	1	Palmer, George	6
Dorvall, Brenda	2	Kennedy, Barb	5	Parson, Chris	4
Edwards, Brian	50	Klaman, John	1	Patel, Amita	3
Edwards, Rick	1	Kramer, Melissa	8	Peterson, Bryan	1
Elder, Wade	2	Lafferty, Taffy	1	Rasmussen, Jodie	6
Engum, Rebecca	1	Long, Sandra	9	Reetz-Stacey, Diana	1
Erickson, Todd	4	Mahugh, Dale	1	Robinson, Wayne	1
Foster, Julie	1	Mantooth, Carrie	2	Roos, Bobbie	1
French, Glenn	1	Martell, Kari	1	Schubring, Del	8
Furniss, Patti	1	Martin, Cherelee	1	Slane, Gary	1
Gardner, DeLynn	4	McCarthy, Mora	3	Smitham, Jim	13
Giese, Bob	2	McIntyre, Randy	1	Steele, Vickie	1
Gorman, Thomas	1	McNeill, Linda	1	Strand, JR	4
		Medina, Zack	6	Vannatta, Jeremy	8
				Wolf, Jeremy	1
				Zdinak, Andy	7

Total Outreach Specialists: 79 as compared to 67 in 2009. Note: the count of records will not equal the total visits displayed due to the inclusion of multiple outreach specialists per visit.

REPORT DETAILS AND COMPARISONS

Thanks to the data gathered from BEAR Team members and entered into ExecutivePulse, numerous report details can be generated that reflect BEAR Team input, business needs, referrals and other activity.

Summary Statistics 1/1/2010 - 12/31/2010

BEAR Team Generated Referrals:	97	
BEAR Team Successfully Closed Referrals:	75	(36 = Information driven; 39 = Project driven)
BEAR Team Time Spent (in hours):	819	

Regarding the 97 referrals generated by BEAR Teams for outreach resources:

Referral status	Count
Remain Open and In Progress	62
Successfully closed	33
Unable to close	2

Type of need addressed by the referrals:

Note: the total type of need may not equal the total number of referrals.

	Count	Percent
Domestic/global marketing and sales	7	9%
Entrepreneurship/management	17	23%
Environment/government regulations	1	1%
Financing/capital	22	29%
Information technologies	2	3%
Local government services	2	3%
Location assistance	2	3%
Operations/production	4	5%
Utility	0	0%
Workforce/training	18	24%

Industries served by BEAR Team Referral Partners:

2-Digit NAICS Code	Records	Percent	2-Digit NAICS Code	Records	Percent
11 - Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	7	3	48 - Transportation and Warehousing, (air, rail, truck, etc.)	3	1
21 - Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	2	1	51 - Information	9	4
22 - Utilities	1	0	52 - Finance and Insurance	4	2
23 - Construction	21	10	53 - Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	4	2
31 - Manufacturing, (food, beverage, etc.)	6	3	54 - Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	24	12
32 - Manufacturing, (wood, paper, etc.)	8	4	56 - Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation S...	6	3
33 - Manufacturing, (primary and fabricated metal, etc.)	9	4	61 - Educational Services	8	4
42 - Wholesale Trade	2	1	62 - Health Care and Social Assistance	20	10
44 - Retail Trade, (motor vehicle, furniture, etc.)	14	7	71 - Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	11	5
45 - Retail Trade, (sporting goods, book, music, etc.)	13	6	72 - Accommodation and Food Services	13	6
48 - Transportation and Warehousing, (air, rail, truck, etc.)	3	1	81 - Other Services (except Public Administration)	18	9
51 - Information	9	4	92 - Public Administration	2	1
52 - Finance and Insurance	4	2			
53 - Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	4	2			
54 - Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	24	12			

TOP IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND STRENGTHS

Montana employers that completed BEAR surveys ranked their top five business needs in 2010:

1. Workman's Comp Reform
2. State Tax Structure
3. Health Insurance
4. Local Tax Structure
5. Access to Capital

Montana employers that completed BEAR surveys ranked their top five strengths of doing business in Montana in 2010:

1. Recreational Amenities
2. Workforce Loyalty
3. Healthcare Services
4. Colleges/Universities
5. Workforce Quality

BUSINESSES VISITED ACCORDING TO SALES:

Businesses with under \$500,000 in sales: 135
 Businesses with \$500,000 to \$1 million in sales: 28
 Businesses with \$1 million to \$5 million in sales: 35
 Businesses with \$5 million to \$10 million in sales: 3
 Businesses with \$10 million to \$25 million in sales: 1
 Businesses with \$25 million to \$50 million in sales: 2

MT BEAR TEAM REFERRAL PARTNERS

The following is a list of current referral agencies that have responded to requests for assistance in 2010:

BUTTE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	DSTUDIO 12	MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY-BILLING
BUTTE JOB SERVICE	FIRST INTERSTATE BANK	MONTANA TECH
CAREER TRANSITIONS	FIRST SECURITY BANK	PPL
CASCADE COUNTY	FLATHEAD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE	SCORE
CENTENE CORP	Great Falls JOB SERVICE	SEARS HOLDINGS
CITY OF GREAT FALLS	GREEN VALLEY DESIGNS	THE CONNECT GROUP
CYNROC	HEADWATERS RC&D	TRANSTECH CENTER
MT DEPT OF COMMERCE INTERNATIONAL TRADE & RELATIONS BUREAU	JOHN P MABIE CPA	URA
MT DEPT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY WORKFORCE SERVICES DIVISION	LIVINGSTON JOB SERVICE	WENDY J WEISSMAN CPA PC
MT DEPT OF COMMERCE	MAVERICK GROUP/CYNERGY ADVERTISING	ZEE CREATIVE
	MONTANA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION	

In Conclusion:

The BEAR program began in Billings in 2001 and spread to Kalispell, Great Falls and Butte. With the purchase of ExecutivePulse data access for the entire state in 2006, the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) paved the way for the statewide BEAR (Business Expansion And Retention) Program to flourish. Now working as a partnership, the GOED, Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Department of Labor and MEDA administer the statewide program. Thanks to incredible dedication and professionalism on the part of individual BEAR teams all across the state, businesses are getting much needed support, which plays a key role in the growth and stability of Montana's economy. With the advent of Incumbent Worker Training funds, the BEAR Program has become even more essential to the success of Montana's businesses and workforce.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael and Gloria O'Rourke
Montana BEAR Statewide Coordinators

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