

Testimony on HB-198

MY NAME IS STEVE JENNINGS, PRESIDENT OF THE BEAVERHEAD OUTDOORS ASSOCIATION. I REPRESENT SPORTSMEN, RANCHERS, AND ALL THAT ENJOY OUTDOOR RECREATION IN BEAVERHEAD COUNTY

WE ADAMANTLY OPPOSE HB-198 WHICH WOULD STRIP LANDOWNERS OF THEIR PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS WHEN DEALING WITH UTILITIES. THE MEMBERS OF THE BOA SUPPORT THE FARMING AND RANCHING COMMUNITIES, WHO PROVIDE VALUABLE HABITAT FOR DEER, ELK, AND MOOSE AS WELL AS PHEASANT AND SAGE GROUSE. MANY OF THESE LAND OWNERS PROVIDE TO THE HUNTER, FREE OF CHARGE, EXCELLENT HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES. ALLOWING UNRESTRAINED LAND GRABS BY UTILITY COMPANIES WILL DESTROY MANAGEMENT PLANS, HABITAT, AND LAND VALUES.

THE SOLE PURPOSE OF THIS BILL IS TO CIRCUMVENT THE RECENT, AND CORRECT IN MY VIEW COURT RULING, WHICH DENIED EMINENT DOMAIN POWERS TO PRIVATE UTILITIES. I URGE THE COMMITTEE TO VOTE TO REJECT THIS BILL. THANK YOU.