

Exhibit No. 6

Date 3-19-11

Bill No. HB 2

# BIG SKY SPECIAL NEEDS COOPERATIVE

**Auchard Creek**

562-3528

**Augusta**

562-3384

**Brady**

753-2522

**Bynum**

469-2373

**Choteau**

466-5303

**Conrad**

278-5521

**Cut Bank**

873-2229

**Dupuyer**

472-3297

**Dutton**

476-3424

**Fairfield**

467-2103

**Galata**

432-2123

**Golden Ridge**

467-2010

**Greenfield**

467-2433

**Heart Butte**

338-3644

**Kneass**

734-5217

**Miller**

466-2232

**Mountain View**

338-2433

**New Rockport**

466-5532

**Power**

463-2251

**Rockport**

469-2387

**Shelby**

434-2622

**Sunburst**

937-7366

**Valier**

279-3610

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March 19, 2011  
Ripple Effect of House Bill 002  
Special Education Services in Rural Co-ops

Thank you to the Committee for understanding and hearing Special Ed's need to keep Maintenance of Effort in tact to avoid reversion of Federal Dollars and an in-run of the local general fund budgets.

At the same time though, a flat budget impacts rural Montana greatly. Funding is driven by school enrollment and north central Montana's population is not increasing.

SpEd Cooperatives are funded primarily by federal grants and state allowable costs formulas. Here are our dollars across time.

	08-09	09-10	10-11
<b>Federal \$</b>	883,854	882,263	872,205
<b>State \$</b>	366,123	362,420	358,807
<b>Difference</b>	-----	\$5321	\$13,671
<b>Kids in SpEd</b>	491	427	429
<b>High Needs Kids</b>	72	(ED,AU,CD,OH,TB)	96

Our Co-op provides services across four counties. We drive to more than 20 schools and attendance centers. All schools are mandated to provide special education services regardless of size and location. We go to the student.

All costs continue to go up. Gas will be a dollar more per gallon by the end of this school year as compared to last year. Health Insurance went up by 31% this year. The cost of educational materials keeps increasing. And of most importance to note, even though overall enrollment is decreasing the needs of the children we serve get greater each year.

Special Education in rural areas has been doing more with less. Another flat budget year will translate to a cut for rural students and the services they need.

Respectfully submitted,  
Judith Gosnell-Lamb, Director BSSNC

