

MONTANA MINING ASSOCIATION

EXHIBIT 14
DATE 3-26-13
HB HR 4

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March 26, 2013

Hon. Lee Randall
Chairman, House Agriculture Committee
Montana Legislature

Re: HR 4, House Resolution Opposing the Federal Forest Jobs and Recreation Act

Dear Chairman Randall:

I write to you in my capacity as the Executive Director of the Montana Mining Association. I hope you will accept this letter as the Association's statement of support for HR 4, Rep. Kerry White's House Resolution Opposing the Federal Forest Jobs and Recreation Act ("Federal Act"). HR 4 is scheduled for hearing before the House Agriculture Committee on March 26.

The Federal Act would create over 620,000 acres of new wilderness area. This designation would effectively remove these acres from future mineral exploration and development. Although not all of these areas are mineralized, some are and should not be removed from future development and exploration.

The Federal Act would also designate over 500,000 acres of land as restoration area. This designation would result in road closures. Many of the roads in the proposed restoration area were originally constructed to reach mine sites. Closing these roads makes it more difficult, if not impossible, to reach these historic mine sites. Inasmuch as historic mine sites are prime locations for locating additional mineralization, designating the restoration areas effectively removes them from exploration and development.

We note that a recent Montana Chamber of Commerce Survey finds that 73% of Montanans believe the state should encourage mining. As such, we don't believe that removing over a million acres from mineral exploration is good public policy. We would respectfully submit that if enacted, the Federal Act sacrifices future jobs and prosperity for illusory, minimal, temporary and non-sustainable forest development.

The Montana Mining Association opposes the Federal Forest Jobs and Recreation Act. We support HR 4 and would ask you and your committee to enthusiastically endorse it with a DO PASS recommendation.

Sincerely,



Tom K. Hopgood, Executive Director
Montana Mining Association
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