EXHIBIT 2
DATE 2/14/13
HB 178

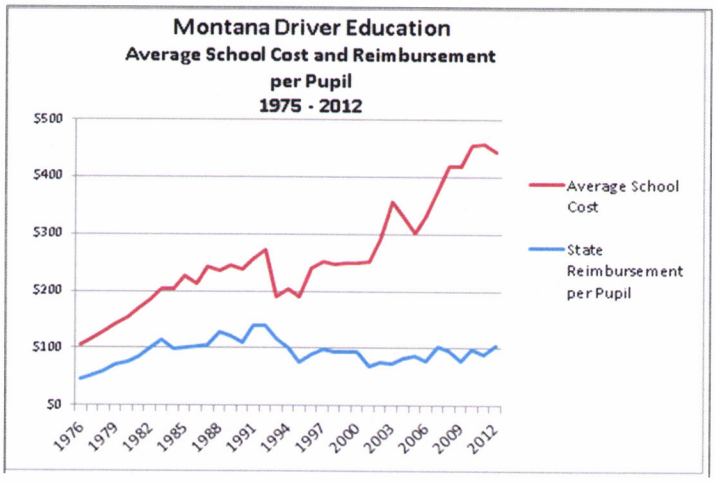
Montana Novice Driver Education Fiscal Challenge

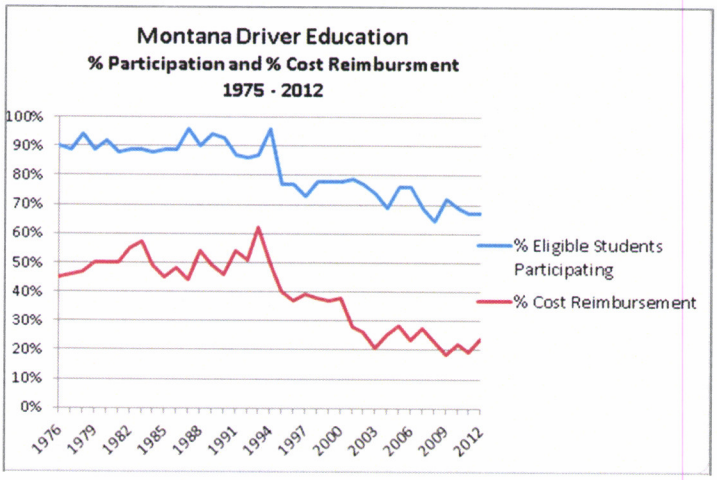
Safety on Montana's roads concerns families and communities throughout the state.

Traffic education is offered through Montana public schools to every eligible teen within the school's geographic area, 61-5-106, MCA. Increasing funding for novice driver education will mitigate the effect of the increasing financial burden on the families of novice drivers to meet a population-wide highway safety need. Funding high school traffic education programs through driver license fees helps provide affordable and accessible driver education to young drivers who travel our highways with knowledge and skills developed through professional instruction and guided practice.

Population-wide support to provide professional education and training to novice drivers is appropriate and provides a foundation for safe driving.

Traffic Education Funds from a percentage of driver license fees are reimbursed to schools providing OPI approved traffic education programs.





In 2012, the average cost of driver education was $443 and the reimbursement to schools per student was $105. Parents or school districts supported the remaining 76% cost of traffic education which effectively eliminated lower income families and financially strapped school districts from participation.

Stabilizing and increasing the state reimbursement from driver license fees will allow school districts to keep and attract qualified teachers and pass less of the cost of traffic education on to parents, thereby increasing opportunity for more teens to take traffic education.

Motor vehicle crashes are the No. 1 cause of death for teens in the U.S.
Crash risk is highest during the first years of independent driving.
In 2011, Montana teens age 15 - 19 had over 3,000 crashes with 22 fatalities.

Montana's Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) law requires six months of supervised practice and limits passengers and night driving for new drivers under age 18.

Studies in Texas and Oregon show that the teens of parents who choose traffic/driver education for their teens have fewer crashes and citations than teens of parents who elect not to enroll their teen in traffic education.

Montana
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January 2013