

Please Vote YES on SB 352
Sponsor – Sen. Fred Thomas

What does this bill do?

- Raises current county population figure of 20,000 to 55,000 to require a Certificate of Need for ambulatory (outpatient) surgery centers in rural areas

What does this bill not do?

- Does **not** prohibit outpatient surgery centers in rural areas – merely expands the number of counties in mostly rural areas requiring a CON process

Which counties are affected by SB 352?

- Ravalli, Lake, Silver Bow

Do hospitals in those three counties Support SB 352?

- Yes – strongly!

Who testified in Support of SB 352?

- Montana Hospital Association
- Three large hospitals and three small hospitals in Hamilton, Billings, Polson, Missoula, Miles City, and Butte
- Two physicians from Billings and Missoula concerned about the viability of rural hospitals

Who testified as Opponent to SB 352?

- Kalispell Regional Medical Center

Why is SB 352 needed?

- To allow public involvement in rural areas to determine if an ambulatory surgical center in their community or county is needed and would be helpful or harmful

What could be harmful about an ambulatory surgery center opening in a rural community or county with less than 55,000 population?

- Small hospitals (Critical Access Hospitals) could be seriously harmed financially
- Small hospitals could be forced to curtail services or close, adversely affecting access to Emergency Department, delivering of babies, rehab, etc.
- Ambulatory surgery center would likely be For-Profit, restricting patients based on ability to pay and overall health
- Access for uninsured & Medicaid patients could be adversely affected