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**Great Falls Development Authority GFDA
Jolene Bach, Vice President Development
Testimony Regarding the Department of Labor and Industry Budget**

February 15, 2013

Chair Osmundson and Committee Members:

Great Falls Development Authority is providing testimony on behalf of our strong support in favor of the Department of Labor and Industry budget request and the strong relationship between local Job Service offices and economic development.

Job Service agencies assist local economic development agencies in growing our economic base by their support of our labor force and assistance in business retention and recruitment. We work closely with the local Job Service on numerous projects throughout the year. Without the assistance of Barb Hardy and the team in Great Falls we would not have 90 jobs at Emteq, 200+ at Centene, and the 300 we recently landed with the new steel fabrication company ADF Group Inc.

Job Service has truly become a valued partner. The team assists us in recruiting these new companies by providing timely, relevant statistics regarding labor force supply/demand. We routinely hear feedback from companies that we are in their top tier during selection because of the strong workforce data we are able to provide.

The Job Service team works extremely well with existing companies in training and recruiting talent. Over the past five years providing robust services, such as the workforce support that the job service provides, to existing businesses helped our local economy remain relatively flat during the recession.

Our Job Service team is very involved in our community and in many cases serves as a catalyst that brings diverse community groups together to identify industry and service gaps.

The money allocated to the Department of Labor and Industries and in particular to the Job Service Centers is an extremely valued partner in local economic development. As many of you know, Montana is not a state that offers incentives for jobs. We are able to offer exemplary customer service which we've been told keeps us in the running for deals, one recent example being the ADF Group Inc. We are not able to provide that type of timely customer service without our partners at the Job Service. They are a great team that partners well on diverse projects and are integral in growing and diversifying our local economy.

Respectfully submitted,

Jolene Bach
Vice President Development
Great Falls Development Authority