

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the House Local Govt. Committee.

My name is Lloyd Straits. I am a Ducks Unlimited volunteer, and I am here today to represent Ducks Unlimited's position on HB 246. Our position is that Montanans should oppose this legislation.

HB 246 is anti Conservation Easements. I am not sure why you would want to oppose CE's ... Conservation Easements conserve farms, ranches, wetlands, and riparian areas. As such, Conservation Easements are used by many farmers, and ranchers in Montana that care about their property and want to keep it in agriculture or ranching for future generations.

Ducks Unlimited is the world's largest wetlands conservation organization. Here in Montana, DU conserves, restores, and manages wetlands for waterfowl. The natural wetlands also benefit hundreds of other types of birds and animals.

Land protection is a key tool thru which Ducks Unlimited conserves waterfowl habitat. As such, Ducks Unlimited is STRONGLY opposed to HB 246. Conservation Easements are for rural communities, landowners, and wildlife.

Let's keep it that way. Vote against HB 246.

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