BUSINESS & LABOR
EXHIBIT NO. 1
DATE 1-15-13
BILL NO. SB29

MEDA

MONTANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS ASSOCIATION

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MEDA represents over 230 members, who are actively involved in local economic activity, community development, job retention and job creation for Montana.

January 14, 2013

TO: Chairman Jon Sonju and members of the Senate Business, Labor and Economic Affairs Committee Room 422 January 15th; 9:00am

RE: SB29 Revise primary sector workforce program laws

Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) stands in support of SB29 which would revise the Primary Sector Workforce Program laws.

The Primary Sector Workforce Program is a key economic development tool for Montana and has aided in the development of many good paying jobs for Montana residents. The purpose of this legislation is to clean up inconsistencies in statute that occurred at the end of the last legislative session through the passage of SB294 and a Governor's amendment. The Governor's amendment to SB294 at the end of the last session provided that qualifying part-time jobs working between 25 and 34 hours per week would be eligible for workforce training reimbursement under the program.

Unfortunately, the statutory definition of "New job" (39-11-103 (8)) was not modified to allow reimbursement for part-time workers. Further on in the statute it says clearly that funds may be awarded to applicants only for "new jobs" which is where the inconsistency lies. Therefore, SB29 amends the definition of "new job" to strike the exclusion of "part time" jobs from the definition.

Finally, the Departments rule-making authority was stricken and needs to be amended back into the statute. Rule-making authority for the Department is important since that is how the program application and guidelines are promulgated.

Thank you for your support of SB29.

For MEDA,

Tracy McIntyre, President

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