



## Great Falls Public Schools

April 16, 2013

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Members of the Energy and Telecommunications Committee,

Please accept this written testimony as support for Senate Joint Resolution No. 29 which requests an interim study to investigate the benefits and impacts of adopting green school standards with the results of the study being reported to the 64<sup>th</sup> legislature.

I fully support this interim study because of my experience in working in schools with students and helping organize a statewide school energy summit. The cost of energy is a vital part of every school district budget. Because of the volatility of energy costs, it has become a critical part of the overall operation of schools. In my lifetime, I have witnessed how major world crisis can drastically impact the cost and availability of energy needed to operate school buildings.

In my opinion, now is an important time to be forward thinking when it comes to making decisions about major community investments which generally last eighty to one hundred years. It is well worth the investment to study the issue of adopting the green school standards. The opportune time to impact the energy consumption in schools is during the planning and construction phase. Green schools are documented to use fewer resources to operate, while providing a better learning environment for students.

During my sixteen year term as the Superintendent of the Townsend School District, we implemented a variety of measures which diversified our energy sources while employing practices and procedures to reduce consumption. Our solar, wind, and biomass projects continue to be a great learning tool for our students who will be the future leaders in their communities. Lighting projects, which replaced existing lighting with more energy efficient lights, also impacted energy usage throughout the district. The combination of these efforts allowed the district to continue to invest in these energy saving measures, but more importantly, dedicate more money to the educational process for students.

The Townsend School District also created a student led "Green Club" which involved students in conservation efforts including recycling. I was amazed by the actions taken by students which impacted our community. One of the best conferences I have ever attended during my professional career was organized by a Green Club from Belgrade. By using technology, they were able to Skype in some of the leading experts in the world to discuss the latest trends in energy efficient building and energy conservation. To have experts from around the world dialogue with students was awe inspiring.

Thank you for considering my testimony on a topic which I view as being crucial to the future of schools in every community across our great State.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brian Patrick".

Brian Patrick  
Director of Business Operations  
Great Falls Public Schools

Dear Senate Energy Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on SJ 29. This resolution will allow a study of the importance of a quality environment for the delivery of a quality education. The Bozeman District has made it a priority to invest in energy saving enhancements for our older schools. In addition, we prioritize energy savings when we build new schools. I'm sure that an interim study would discover that Montana school districts are in need of help not only to maintain our buildings but make them green buildings.

In closing, some districts that are struggling with reduced enrollment numbers and lack of voter support for levies and bonds and would greatly benefit from this study and eventual support. Limited funds that are not spent on facilities expenditures would be available to deliver much needed education dollars directly to students. This resolution would go a long way in improving the educational environment for all of Montana's children.

Sincerely,

Denise Hayman

Bozeman School District Trustee

The Billings Public Schools take great pride in pursuing responsible and efficient management of their resources. This includes an aggressive program of energy conservation (Quality Energy Conservation Bonds), recycling, air quality monitoring and the tracking of water and energy consumption in throughout SD2. We believe that through energy conservation and going green, the money we save can be put back into the classroom.

Terry Nelsen Bouck

Superintendent