

County Government Initiatives

Harold Blattie, Montana Association of Counties (MACo) Executive Director, was unable to attend today's meeting but did submit a letter outlining some of the MACo-member resolutions that have been submitted and some of the legislative initiatives MACo will be pursuing in the 2007 session. Following is a summary. The material in quotes is taken directly from Mr. Blattie's letter.

MACo-member resolutions

- Change mail ballot election process.
- Permanent vehicle registration and junk vehicles. Because the definition of junk vehicle does not include a vehicle that is permanently registered, permanently-registered vehicles can never be considered junk vehicles.

MACo-initiated legislative proposals

- "Provide for the reimbursement to local governments for the dollars of tax obligation that will be shifted to other taxpayers as a result of SB 68 (2005)." Passage of SB 68 resulted in raising the exempt threshold for business equipment tax from \$5,000 to \$20,000. "This increase results in more property being exempt, thus a reduction in taxable value."

An amendment was proposed during the session that would have made an offsetting increase in each jurisdiction's entitlement share allocation but for various reasons, the amendment was not put on the bill.

- Complete rewrite of special district laws. "Currently there are a multitude of special districts that may be formed to provide a particular service. The laws governing these districts are a hodgepodge that has evolved over many years with different provisions being enacted at different times, with no regard to looking at uniformity."
- Provide for uniform penalties for zoning violations. A bill was drafted for the 2005 session but was not introduced.