



Department of Public Health and Human Services

Public Health & Safety Division ♦ Communicable Disease Control & Prevention Bureau

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EXHIBIT 9
DATE 1-28-15
HB 245

Steve Bullock, Governor

Richard H. Opper, Director

Jim Murphy, Bureau Chief
Communicable Disease Control and Prevention Bureau
Public Health and Safety Division
Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services

Testimony in opposition of HB 245: "AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SMALL HERD EXEMPTION PERMIT AND FEE FOR CERTAIN PRODUCERS OF MILK; REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF LIVESTOCK TO ADOPT RULES TO ADMINISTER SMALL HERD EXEMPTION PERMITS; EXEMPTING CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS FROM PARTICULAR PRODUCTION, USE, AND SALES REQUIREMENTS; MAKING CONSUMERS LIABLE FOR HEALTH ISSUES; AND AMENDING SECTIONS 81-2-102, 81-21-102, 81-21-103, 81-22-101, 81-22-102, 81-22-202, 81-22-303, 81-22-304, 81-22-413, 81-22-415, 81-22-416, 81-22-501, AND 81-23-106, MCA."

On behalf of the Department of Public Health and Human Services, I am here to express our opposition to HB 245.

Our department deeply respects the beliefs of the bill's sponsor and its proponents and their right to consume the milk produced from their livestock. However, when we examine the well documented risks of consuming raw milk and compare those with the limited benefits, we cannot support making a product that can be potentially harmful more widely available.

As a state agency created to protect the public health, DPHHS opposes expanding the availability of raw milk for the following reasons (all data comes from the Centers for Disease Control or the Food and Drug Administration):

- 1) Consumption of raw milk is directly associated with disease outbreaks. The Food and Drug Administration has identified at least 10 disease causing bacteria, many of which can cause severe illness and death, in raw milk. The most common bacteria identified include *Campylobacter*, *E. coli* and *Salmonella*.
 - a. Since 1998 at least 93 outbreaks sickening almost 1,900 people, hospitalizing 200 and killing 2 have been directly linked to raw milk. Due to under-reporting or indirect linkages the actual number is estimated to be much higher.
 - b. Consumption of raw milk has been linked with Montana outbreaks- including a recent salmonella outbreak in central Montana sickening 7 and hospitalizing three, including two children.
 - c. A person is 150 times more likely to become ill from consuming raw milk than from pastuerized milk.
- 2) At least 17 states ban the sale of raw milk, many others allow very limited use while others restrict sales to certain settings.
 - a. 81% of the outbreaks attributed to raw milk occurred in the states that have legalized sales.
 - b. The number of outbreaks has increased in recent years as more states expand the availability of raw milk, from 30 in 2007-09 to 51 in 2010-12.

Public health officials routinely investigate outbreaks related to other food products and most are not caused by raw milk. Meat products, eggs and vegetables are all vulnerable if not handled properly and are no one is proposing banning their sale. It is important to recognize that we are trying to prevent illnesses and would not support a movement to eat raw meat or eat unwashed vegetables. As a result we remind you to cook your food, wash your vegetables and please make sure milk available for sale is pasteurized.