



**MONTANA
FARM BUREAU
FEDERATION**

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We Care For The Country

December 16, 2021

Attorney General Austin Knudsen
Office of the Attorney General
Montana Department of Justice
215 North Sanders
Helena, MT 59620-1401

RE: 2022 Proposed Ballot Issue #9

Dear Attorney General Austin Knudsen,

The Montana Farm Bureau is writing to you, on behalf of our farmer and rancher members across the state, with concerns for the 2022 Proposed Ballot Issue #9 and the implications shown in the fiscal note, with potential for more impacts than are shown now. This ballot issue has adverse effects on the tax burden faced by rural property owners.

The Fiscal Note for Ballot Issue #9, shows many downfalls already, with a limit on taxes for Class 4 properties, there is a gap of up to \$175 million created in spending. This creates implications for the State General Fund and the State Special Revenue Account with gaps for local governments and the state levies 95 mills for schools. We request a more in-depth look into the Fiscal Note to fully understand the impact on local and county governments and the different tax payers.

This Ballot Issue will shift the burden from residential properties to many other classes of property, including agricultural land. The farmers and ranchers who pay taxes on agricultural land, already carry a large burden of property taxes, and should not unfairly, take on more.

We ask the Office of the Attorney General to take a close look at this Ballot Issue and consider the consequences the state may face. Additionally, we would like the Attorney General to place a warning on the petition through Montana [MCA 13-27-312(9)]. If this proposed ballot issue does "cause significant material harm to one more business interest in Montana" the people who support it, should be made aware.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Cyndi Johnson

Montana Farm Bureau Federation
President