

Billings Preservation Society
914 Division Street
Billings, MT 59101



January 6, 2023

Dear Long Range Planning Subcommittee,

I am writing in support of House Bill 12, which funds the Montana Historic Preservation Grant Program 2025 Biennium Projects. I am engaged on a regular basis in the educational programming, preservation and fundraisers of the Moss Mansion Historic House Museum and am whole-heartedly in favor of the opportunities this Bill will provide for museums and historic preservation efforts across Montana. I am hopeful that funding will be available to the Moss Mansion to address our critical boiler upgrade project.

The Billings Preservation Society needs this funding to address the Moss Mansion's 120-year-old heating system, which relies on pipes installed throughout the building in 1903. The degraded pipes currently pose a significant threat to the entire building, which if not addressed promptly could escalate to a catastrophic emergency. We have already experienced a close call with a crack in a fragile radiator still in use in the structure, and much has been learned about the integrity of the system since other deferred maintenance projects have been completed in the last five years. We have been unable to use our heating system to its full capacity since 2017 due to the risk of ruptured pipes, leading to temperature fluctuations that affect guests and staff during harsh Montana winter weather and putting functioning potable water plumbing at risk of freezing from the upper floors to the basement.

A project of this magnitude is not something that the Moss Mansion has the capacity to do alone. With the help of this grant, we could address this crucial project in a timely manner. Until this system is refurbished we will, unfortunately, continue to live on borrowed time.

The Moss Mansion Historic House Museum is a significant member of the Billings community and the state of Montana, welcoming over 17,000 visitors each year. A large portion of these guests come from out of state, and many plan a trip to Billings specifically to see the Moss Mansion. Extensive water damage to the Moss would be a detriment to tourism in the region and endangers our ability to operate for years should that kind of repair become necessary. We urge you to support this local treasure and ensure our role in Montana remaining the last best place.

Corinna Sinclair
Director of Operations, Moss Mansion Museum
256-5100 | www.mossmansion.com | corinna@mossmansion.com

Executive Board

Mike Nelson, President • Jared Maloney, Past President/Treasurer • Lue Ponich, Secretary • Nate Allie, Representative
Brent Sumner, Representative • Luci Wollschlager, Representative • Andrew Newman, Representative

Board of Directors

Caitlin Corson • Deborah Cox • Maggie Hardt • Jade Haynie • George Maragos • Shaun Ostermiller

Representatives

Jim Foley • Stacey Jacobs • Lora Mattox

Executive Director

Aly Turner