

SECTION A PUBLIC COMMENT 2/15/2021

Details:

Bill: HB-2: General Appropriations Act 2021-02-15 09:00 AM - (H) JAS on General Government

Position: Informational Witness

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Montana Department of Commerce

Name: Bonnie Martello

Email: [bmartello@mt.gov](mailto:bmartello@mt.gov)

Phone: (406) 841-2596

City, State: Helena

Written Statement: Not Provided

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-2: General Appropriations Act 2021-02-15 09:00 AM - (H) JAS on General Government

Position: Informational Witness

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: NeighborWorks Montana

Name: Kaia Peterson

Email: [kpeterson@nwmmt.org](mailto:kpeterson@nwmmt.org)

Phone: (406) 531-3449

City, State: Missoula, MT

Written Statement: Not Provided

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-2: General Appropriations Act 2021-02-15 09:00 AM - (H) JAS on General Government

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Helena Housing Authority

Name: Michael M O'Neil

Email: [moneil@hhamt.org](mailto:moneil@hhamt.org)

Phone: (406) 442-7970

City, State: Helena

Written Statement: Not Provided

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-2: General Appropriations Act 2021-02-15 09:00 AM - (H) JAS on General Government

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: District XI Human Resource Council  
Name: Jim Morton  
Email: [jpm@hrcxi.org](mailto:jpm@hrcxi.org)  
Phone: (406) 370-9411  
City, State: Missoula, MT  
Written Statement: Not Provided  
Files:  
Testify via Zoom: Yes  
Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-2: General Appropriations Act 2021-02-15 09:00 AM - (H) JAS on General Government

Position: Informational Witness

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Missoula Housing Authority

Name: Mary Melton

Email: [mmelton@missoulahousing.org](mailto:mmelton@missoulahousing.org)

Phone: (406) 549-4113

City, State: Missoula

Written Statement: I am an Asset Manager for Missoula Housing Authority. We have about 750 apartments that we own and operate. Many of these are run under various local, state and federal programs. Currently MHA has about 30 residents who owe over \$60,000 in back rent and late fees. Many of them are employed, but employment right now can be tricky as many work in service industry jobs. Jobs that have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. For our clientele, missing one paycheck is often the difference between being able to pay rent and not; being able to pay their power bills or not; being able to put food on the table or not. We understand and empathize with the issues they are having. But many (most) of our properties rely on rents to pay for loans and upkeep on the properties. This is not only our conundrum--it affects landlords across the state. We want to keep people housed. Our residents are people who are at very low or extremely low income levels. It is our mission to help keep these vulnerable people housed. The funding that the CARES Act provided last year, and the latest round of monies from the federal government in order to help us keep our residents in place have been crucial. It meant peace of mind for those receiving the funding--being able to continue to have a safe, decent place to live and shelter. MHA helped with the Emergency Housing Assistance Program last year through the Neighborworks program that helped people access these funds. Our staff have had people that we helped (both homeowners and renters) call us from across the state asking about the availability of new funding. We have very little information or hope that we can offer them right now. It is essential that we get these funds out into the communities and to the tenants and landlords that desperately need them.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-2: General Appropriations Act 2021-02-15 09:00 AM - (H) JAS on General Government

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: MT NAHRO

Name: Jim McGrath

Email: [jmcgrath@missoulahousing.org](mailto:jmcgrath@missoulahousing.org)

Phone: (406) 549-4113

City, State: Missoula

Written Statement: We support appropriating as much of the Emergency Rental Assistance funding as soon as possible. Now it the greatest need. Many small mom and pop landlords around the state cannot wait and continue to absorb lack of rent while being unable to evict due to the moratorium.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer