



PO BOX 201706
Helena, MT 59620-1706
(406) 444-3064
FAX (406) 444-3036

Economic Affairs Interim Committee

61st Montana Legislature

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April 7, 2010

Jan French
Chair, Board of Livestock
c/o Department of Livestock
301 N. Roberts, Room 101
Helena MT 59620

Dear Ms. French:

Thank you for attending the Economic Affairs Committee meeting in March and please convey similar thanks to John Lehfeldt for also attending the meeting. As you heard during that meeting, the Economic Affairs Committee voted to request responses from the Board of Livestock to several issues that were presented during the Committee's March 30 meeting. These include responses to:

- Recommendations from the working group regarding the designated surveillance area (DSA) and the Official Order related to the DSA (whether that order is listed as Order No. 09-02-D or No. 10-01-D), approved by the Board of Livestock on Jan. 13, 2010. A copy of these recommendations is attached.
- A proposal to divert or request a return of the Beef Check-off funds that currently go to the Cattlemen's Beef Board and the Montana Beef Council so that a portion of the money could be used to help pay for brucellosis testing in the DSA. Senator Kim Hansen's idea is that all Montana beef producers have a stake in assuring Montana's brucellosis-free status and since all beef producers pay the Beef Check-off funds for marketing purposes, then some of that money ought to help with maintaining and marketing Montana beef as brucellosis-free.
- A proposal to determine whether Build America Bonds are an appropriate source of funding for a new Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory and comments on what the Board of Livestock feels would be appropriate in terms of shared space with any of the other laboratories mentioned in the SJR 14 report, a draft of which is available at:
http://leg.mt.gov/content/Committees/Interim/2009_2010/Economic_Affairs/Meeting_Documents/SJ14studyreport3-11-draft.pdf.

The Economic Affairs Committee would like the comments from the Board of Livestock for review at the Committee's May 25-26 meeting. If this could be put on the agenda for your May 18 meeting, that timeline would appear to work well. If you have questions about any of the materials, please call. Thank you again for your cooperation with and attention to these requests.

Sincerely,

Pat Murdo
Legislative Services

Enclosures: Recommendations from the Working Group
Copies of Order No. 10-01-D (1 page) and Order No. 09-02-D

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