

January 31, 2011

TO: MPMCSA MEMBERS

FROM: RONNA ALEXANDER, E.D.

LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN:

Week Four: Last week the House Human Services Committee heard the Montana Chamber's bill to strengthen employer rights in situations involving employee's use of medical marijuana. The Association supported HB43, that would make it clear that employers have the right to dismiss employees who come to work impaired. The committee has not yet taken action on the bill so there is still time to contact your legislator on this issue.

A bill that would significantly lower workers' compensation premiums will be heard on Monday, (today) January 31st in the House Business Committee. House Bill 334, Rep. Scott Reichner-Big Fork, and again at the request of the Montana Chamber of Commerce, is projected to save employers around 25% in just the first year! The bill will not pass without business owners contacting their legislators. They need to hear from people back home. Please take time to share a work comp experience with your individual Representatives and those on the committee. You can do this easily by going to this link and following the directions.

<http://leg.mt.gov/css/sessions/62nd/legwebmessage.asp>. Members of the House Business Committee are:

Elsie Arntzen-Billings (Madam Chair)

Tom Berry-Roundup

Carlie Boland-Great Falls

Christy Clark-Choteau

Virginia Court-Billings

Lila Evans-Browning

Tim Furey-Missoula

Ed Greef-Florence

Chuck Hunter-Helena

Harry Klock-Harlowton

Jonathan McNiven-Huntley

Pat Noonan-Butte

Michelle Reinhart-Missoula

Matthew Rosendale-Glendive

Dan Salomon-Ronan

Sterling Small-Busby

Cary Smith-Billings

Carolyn Squires-Missoula

Gordon Vance-Bozeman

Jeff Welborn-Dillon

BILLS REPORT

Every week we will send a legislative update to your inboxes; the report will be available on the Montana/WPMA website. You can also monitor bills yourself by creating a preference list on the Legislative website; http://leg.mt.gov/css/Sessions/62nd/laws_pref.asp.

SENATE BILL 9: MIXING ZONES/CONTAMINATED UST SITES: *Senator Keane/Butte* To allow mixing zones at petroleum contaminated sites; resulting in a closure (no further action) letter from the DEQ and releasing the site from any further cleanup or monitoring action. The bill passed out of Committee 12-2, was sent to the floor of the Senate where it passed 50-0.

This doesn't happen very often.....The bill will now be sent over to the House of Representatives and be scheduled for a hearing in, most likely, the House Natural Resources Committee.

SENATE BILL 29: MANDATORY ALCOHOL SALES TRAINING: *Senator Lynda Moss/Billings.*

This is the bill that was endorsed by the Interim Law & Justice Committee to require mandatory training of employees in the sales/service of alcohol. The Association along with other affected organizations offered several amendments to the bill including; a three-year certification, statewide pre-emption to local governments seeking to pass similar ordinances and, a section that would assure that if the Department of Revenue offered a training program that it meet the same qualifications as other approved private programs. The bill was passed out of the Senate Business Committee 6-5 so is not without controversy. Most of the amendments we sought were included however, the DUI task forces and MADD have been attempting to degrade our position. All affected associations will meet to determine the course of action hence forth prior to the bill being voted on by the full Senate. POSITION: TBD

BILLS TO BE MONITORED:

HOUSE BILL 201/368: GUNS IN THE WORKPLACE: *Representative Wendy Warbuton/Havre*

Representative Warbuton's initial bill, HB201, has been tabled and re-introduced as House Bill 368. The bill would require employers to allow employees to carry guns in locked vehicles in a business parking lot. It would nullify any policy an employer may have that prohibits firearms on company property. The bill will be heard on February 2nd in the House Judiciary Committee and most likely will pass with no problem. The Montana Chamber will be opposing this bill along with several business entities who have safety sensitive environments at their workplace and who have policies that dictate that employees "leave their guns at home". This bill is an anti-business bill that violates personal property rights and I can't believe none of you care. It's a solution looking for a problem as there is probably less than 20% of employers who currently have an anti-gun policy. If the bill passes it sets a dangerous precedent.