



Montana Nonprofit Association

Strong Nonprofits, Strong Montana

POLICY ALERT

The 2019 Montana Legislative Session

March 16, 2019

A weekly update for Montana's charitable nonprofits.

On Monday, 3/18 at 3:00 p.m. the Senate Local Government committee will hear [SB323](#), which allows governments to create and assess "Public Safety Districts". The district boundaries would be drawn to exclude properties already paying taxes, and include property that is tax exempt, with limited exceptions including government property, churches, and education. Funding would be used for law enforcement, fire protection, some prosecutorial and judicial services including diversion, and mental health services. In essence this is a fee which would be assessed on nonprofit organizations should a local government decide to do so in order to fund public safety services - which is what property tax does. Two possible action steps for you:

1) Please consider testifying, either in writing by [submitting comment](#) to the Committee secretary prior to the hearing, or in person on Monday in Room 405. A statement that includes both your mission impact and the economic benefit to your community - either through revenue brought in or expense diverted - will be helpful.

2) Reach out to committee members from your district and let them know how this will directly impact you.

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[Tom Richmond](#) (R) SD 28 Member

[Russel \(Russ\) Tempel](#) (R) SD 14 Member

[Fred Thomas](#) (R) SD 44 Member

The bill is confusing to read, but it allows local governments to assess fees on most nonprofits to pay for public safety services. Please weigh in.

The extension of the Montana Charitable Endowment Tax Credit, [SB111](#), was heard in House Taxation last week. It was a brief, positive hearing with no opponents, and we hope to hear this week that the bill will move forward. If your community has benefitted from a gift involving the tax credit, please consider reaching out to your representatives and letting them know.

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[Tom Welch](#) (R) HD 72 Member

[Kerry White](#) (R) HD 64 Member

[Daniel Zolnikov](#) (R) HD 45 Member

A note about Medicaid expansion: MNA is working directly with the bill sponsor to try to get the community engagement requirement removed from [HB658](#) without actively opposing Medicaid expansion. Mandatory volunteerism would be a significant burden (and unfunded expense) for nonprofit organizations. If you have questions or need additional information, please [let us know](#). Thank you.