

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

STEVE BULLOCK
GOVERNOR



ANGELA McLEAN
LT. GOVERNOR

April 1, 2015

The Honorable Austin Knudsen
Speaker of the House
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59620

The Honorable Debby Barrett
President of the Senate
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Speaker Knudsen and President Barrett:

In accordance with the power vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Montana, I hereby veto House Bill 449 (HB 449), "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR FISCAL NOTES THAT INCLUDE BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENTS; AMENDING SECTION 5-4-203, MCA; AND PROVIDING A TERMINATION DATE."

HB 449 requires the Legislative Fiscal Analyst, with the assistance of the Budget Director, to prepare a business impact statement for proposed legislation. This may seem like a reasonable request, given that the Office of Budget and Program Planning (OBPP) already prepares fiscal notes. However, the purpose of the fiscal note is to show in dollar amounts the estimated increase or decrease in governmental revenue or expenditures, costs that may be absorbed without additional funds, and long-range financial implications. A fiscal note may further illustrate technical or mechanical defects to a bill. At present the Budget Director works in cooperation with the state or local agencies affected by the bill to accomplish these requirements. Collectively these are sensible and realistic expectations.

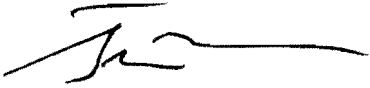
However, asking the OBPP and Legislative Fiscal Division to determine the impact of proposed policies on private businesses is neither reasonable nor realistic. They do not have the expertise or resources to determine what costs businesses of varying sizes across a vast and diverse state may or may not incur relating to proposed legislation.

HB 449 is also unnecessary. Private businesses already have the opportunity to review and comment on proposed legislation throughout the legislative process. That is the best opportunity for both businesses and the Legislature to analyze the impacts.

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For these reasons, I veto HB 449.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Bullock", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

STEVE BULLOCK
Governor

cc: Legislative Services Division
Secretary of State