

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

STEVE BULLOCK
GOVERNOR



ANGELA MCLEAN
LT. GOVERNOR

April 24, 2015

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

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

Dear President Barrett and Speaker Knudsen:

In accordance with the power vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Montana, I hereby veto Senate Bill 37 (SB 37), "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR FILING OF CERTAIN WATER RIGHTS CLAIMS; CREATING A DEADLINE FOR FILING THESE CLAIMS; PROVIDING FOR A SUPPLEMENTAL PRELIMINARY DECREE; ELIMINATING CERTAIN PROCESSING FEES; AMENDING SECTIONS 3-7-212, 85-2-221, 85-2-222, 85-2-231, 85-2-232, 85-2-233, AND 85-2-234, MCA; AND REPEALING SECTION 85-2-225, MCA."

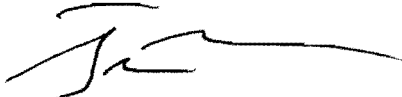
SB 37 requires that the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) publish notice of newly established filing deadlines for exempt water rights, as well as send the notice to certain property owners and post it in county courthouses. The bill further requires that water judges issue supplementary preliminary decrees containing claims for exempt rights.

The fiscal note for SB 37 indicates it will cost \$214,920 in FY 2016, and approximately \$20,000 annually in subsequent years. While I am not opposed to the objectives of this bill, I remain committed to safeguarding Montana's first-rate financial standing, which includes maintaining a rainy day fund for unexpected contingencies. The budget I presented to the 64th session of the Legislature balances our budget without raising taxes. It builds upon the fiscally responsible management that has served our state so well and makes sustainable investments in education, health care and infrastructure that will benefit Montanans for generations to come.

I take my job to be a responsible steward of Montana's taxpayer dollars seriously. SB 37, while reasonable in its policy objectives, is too costly to be funded within the constraints of a responsible budget. The state will continue working to see if we can carry out the policy objectives and if possible fund the provisions in the bill in a future legislative session.

President Barrett
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For these reasons, I veto SB 37.
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