

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

SENATE BILL NO. 287

INTRODUCED BY W. MCKAMEY, D. BEDEY, S. FITZPATRICK, B. LER

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT GENERALLY REVISING STATE FINANCE LAWS; CREATING
THE MONTANA GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY TRUST; PROVIDING FOR TRANSFERS OF VOLATILE
REVENUES TO THE TRUST; PROVIDING FOR ANNUAL DISTRIBUTIONS OF INTEREST INCOME TO
STATE SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNTS; PROVIDING FOR REINVESTMENT OF A PORTION OF THE
TRUST FOR PENSIONS AND HOUSING; PROVIDING FOR CALCULATIONS RELATED TO VOLATILE
REVENUE; ESTABLISHING A MONTANA WATER DEVELOPMENT STATE SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT;
ESTABLISHING A BETTER LOCAL BRIDGE ACCOUNT; TRANSFERRING AUTHORITY FOR CERTAIN
HOUSING LOANS FROM THE COAL TAX TRUST FUND TO THE MONTANA GROWTH AND
OPPORTUNITY TRUST; ESTABLISHING A PENSION FUND; CREATING A MONTANA HOUSING TRUST;
LIMITING THE TRANSFER OF VOLATILE REVENUE WHEN GENERAL FUND DEFICIT IS CERTIFIED OR
OPERATING RESERVE IS ESTIMATED AT A CERTAIN AMOUNT; ESTABLISHING A MONTANA EARLY
CHILDHOOD ACCOUNT, BOARD, AND FUNDING; PROVIDING PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE THAT IS
DISTRIBUTED TO COUNTIES TO BE DISTRIBUTED AS A CREDIT TO CERTAIN PRIMARY RESIDENCES;
REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE TO CERTIFY PRIMARY RESIDENCES; PROVIDING A
PENALTY FOR FALSE OR FRAUDULENT PRIMARY RESIDENCE APPLICATIONS; PROVIDING AN
APPEALS PROCESS FOR CERTIFICATION OF A PRIMARY RESIDENCE; PROVIDING A DEFINITION;
REVISING FUNDING ALLOCATIONS; PROVIDING FOR TRANSFERS; PROVIDING FOR INVESTMENT
INCOME TO BE TRANSFERRED IN EQUAL AMOUNTS TO THE GENERAL FUND AND THE DEBT AND
LIABILITY FREE ACCOUNT; PLACING A CAP ON THE DEBT AND LIABILITY FREE ACCOUNT; REVISING
REPORTING REQUIREMENTS ON THE DEBT AND LIABILITY FREE ACCOUNT; PROVIDING FOR
TRANSFERS FROM THE DEBT AND LIABILITY FREE ACCOUNT; PROVIDING FOR TRANSFERS FROM
THE PENSION STATE SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT FUND TO THE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
OR THE PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM ON CERTIFICATION OF THE RETIREMENT
SYSTEM BOARD; PROVIDING FOR AN INCREASE TO THE EMPLOYER SUPPLEMENTAL

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

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SB0287.003.003

CONTRIBUTION RATE; PROVIDING FOR ~~A-FUND TRANSFER~~ TRANSFERS; PROVIDING FOR
APPROPRIATIONS; AMENDING SECTIONS 15-7-102, 15-10-420, 15-15-101, 15-15-102, 15-15-103, 15-16-
101, 15-17-125, 15-38-302, 47-6-202, 17-6-214, 17-6-308, 17-6-317, 17-7-130, 47-7-134, 17-7-140, 19-3-315,
19-3-316, ~~AND~~ 19-20-609, 85-1-631, 90-6-137, ~~AND~~ 90-6-603, MCA; REPEALING SECTION 17-7-134, MCA;
AMENDING SECTION 5, CHAPTER 48, LAWS OF 2023; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE
DATE.”

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

SECTION 1. SECTION 15-7-102, MCA, IS AMENDED TO READ:

"15-7-102. Notice of classification, market value, and taxable value to owners -- appeals. (1) (a)

Except as provided in 15-7-138, the department shall mail or provide electronically to each owner or purchaser
under contract for deed a notice that includes the land classification, market value, and taxable value of the
land and improvements owned or being purchased. A notice must be mailed or, with property owner consent,
provided electronically to the owner only if one or more of the following changes pertaining to the land or
improvements have been made since the last notice:

- (i) change in ownership;
- (ii) change in classification;
- (iii) change in valuation; or
- (iv) addition or subtraction of personal property affixed to the land.

(b) The notice must include the following for the taxpayer's informational and informal classification
and appraisal review purposes:

- (i) a notice of the availability of all the property tax assistance programs available to property
taxpayers, including the state property tax assistance provided for in [section ~~30~~ 31], the intangible land value
assistance program provided for in 15-6-240, the property tax assistance programs provided for in Title 15,
chapter 6, part 3, and the residential property tax credit for the elderly provided for in 15-30-2337 through 15-
30-2341;

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

- 1 (ii) the total amount of mills levied against the property in the prior year;
- 2 (iii) the market value for the prior reappraisal cycle;
- 3 (iv) if the market value has increased by more than 10%, an explanation for the increase in
- 4 valuation;
- 5 (v) a statement that the notice is not a tax bill; and
- 6 (vi) a taxpayer option to request an informal classification and appraisal review by checking a box
- 7 on the notice and returning it to the department.
- 8 (c) When the department uses an appraisal method that values land and improvements as a unit,
- 9 including the sales comparison approach for residential condominiums or the income approach for commercial
- 10 property, the notice must contain a combined appraised value of land and improvements.
- 11 (d) Any misinformation provided in the information required by subsection (1)(b) does not affect the
- 12 validity of the notice and may not be used as a basis for a challenge of the legality of the notice.
- 13 (2) (a) Except as provided in subsection (2)(c), the department shall assign each classification and
- 14 appraisal to the correct owner or purchaser under contract for deed and mail or provide electronically the notice
- 15 in written or electronic form, adopted by the department, containing sufficient information in a comprehensible
- 16 manner designed to fully inform the taxpayer as to the classification and appraisal of the property and of
- 17 changes over the prior tax year.
- 18 (b) The notice must advise the taxpayer that in order to be eligible for a refund of taxes from an
- 19 appeal of the classification or appraisal, the taxpayer is required to pay the taxes under protest as provided in
- 20 15-1-402.
- 21 (c) The department is not required to mail or provide electronically the notice to a new owner or
- 22 purchaser under contract for deed unless the department has received the realty transfer certificate from the
- 23 clerk and recorder as provided in 15-7-304 and has processed the certificate before the notices required by
- 24 subsection (2)(a) are mailed or provided electronically. The department shall notify the county tax appeal board
- 25 of the date of the mailing or the date when the taxpayer is informed the information is available electronically.
- 26 (3) (a) If the owner of any land and improvements is dissatisfied with the appraisal as it reflects the
- 27 market value of the property as determined by the department or with the classification of the land or

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

1 improvements, the owner may request an informal classification and appraisal review by submitting an
2 objection on written or electronic forms provided by the department for that purpose or by checking a box on the
3 notice and returning it to the department in a manner prescribed by the department.

4 (i) For property other than class three property described in 15-6-133, class four property
5 described in 15-6-134, class ten property described in 15-6-143, and centrally assessed property described in
6 15-23-101, the objection must be submitted within 30 days from the date on the notice.

7 (ii) For class three property described in 15-6-133, class four property described in 15-6-134, and
8 class ten property described in 15-6-143, the objection may be made only once each valuation cycle. An
9 objection must be made in writing or by checking a box on the notice within 30 days from the date on the
10 classification and appraisal notice for a reduction in the appraised value to be considered for both years of the
11 2-year valuation cycle. An objection made more than 30 days from the date of the classification and appraisal
12 notice will be applicable only for the second year of the 2-year valuation cycle. For an objection to apply to the
13 second year of the valuation cycle, the taxpayer shall make the objection in writing or by checking a box on the
14 notice no later than June 1 of the second year of the valuation cycle or, if a classification and appraisal notice is
15 received in the second year of the valuation cycle, within 30 days from the date on the notice.

16 (iii) For centrally assessed property described in 15-23-101(2)(a), the objection must be submitted
17 within 20 days from the date on the notice. A taxpayer may submit an objection up to 10 days after this deadline
18 on request to the department.

19 (iv) (A) For centrally assessed property described in 15-23-101(2)(b) and (2)(c), an objection to the
20 valuation or classification may be made only once each valuation cycle. An objection must be made in writing
21 within the time period specified in subsection (3)(a)(iii) for a reduction in the appraised value to be considered
22 for both years of the 2-year valuation cycle. An objection made after the deadline specified in subsection
23 (3)(a)(iii) will be applicable only for the second year of the 2-year valuation cycle. For an objection to apply to
24 the second year of the valuation cycle, the taxpayer shall make the objection in writing no later than June 1 of
25 the second year of the valuation cycle or, if a classification and appraisal notice is received in the second year
26 of the valuation cycle, within the time period specified in subsection (3)(a)(iii).

27 (B) If a property owner has exhausted the right to object to a valuation, as provided for in

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

subsection (3)(a)(iv)(A), the property owner may ask the department to consider extenuating circumstances to adjust the value of property described in 15-23-101(2)(b) or (2)(c). Occurrences that may result in an adjustment to the value include but are not limited to extraordinary, unusual, or infrequent events that are material in nature and of a character different from the typical or customary business operations, that are not expected to recur frequently, and that are not normally considered in the evaluation of the operating results of a business, including bankruptcies, acquisitions, sales of assets, or mergers.

(b) If the objection relates to residential or commercial property and the objector agrees to the confidentiality requirements, the department shall provide to the objector, by posted mail or electronically, within 8 weeks of submission of the objection, the following information:

(i) the methodology and sources of data used by the department in the valuation of the property;
and

(ii) if the department uses a blend of evaluations developed from various sources, the reasons that the methodology was used.

(c) At the request of the objector or a representative of the objector, and only if the objector or representative signs a written or electronic confidentiality agreement, the department shall provide in written or electronic form:

(i) comparable sales data used by the department to value the property;

(ii) sales data used by the department to value residential property in the property taxpayer's market model area; and

(iii) if the cost approach was used by the department to value residential property, the documentation required in 15-8-111(3) regarding why the comparable sales approach was not reliable.

(d) For properties valued using the income approach as one approximation of market value, notice must be provided that the taxpayer will be given a form to acknowledge confidentiality requirements for the receipt of all aggregate model output that the department used in the valuation model for the property.

(e) The review must be conducted informally and is not subject to the contested case procedures of the Montana Administrative Procedure Act. As a part of the review, the department may consider the actual selling price of the property and other relevant information presented by the taxpayer in support of the

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

1 taxpayer's opinion as to the market value of the property. The department shall consider an independent
2 appraisal provided by the taxpayer if the appraisal meets standards set by the Montana board of real estate
3 appraisers and the appraisal was completed within 6 months of the valuation date pursuant to 15-8-201. If the
4 department does not use the appraisal provided by the taxpayer in conducting the appeal, the department shall
5 provide to the taxpayer the reason for not using the appraisal. The department shall give reasonable notice to
6 the taxpayer of the time and place of the review.

7 (f) After the review, the department shall determine the correct appraisal and classification of the
8 land or improvements and notify the taxpayer of its determination by mail or electronically. The department may
9 not determine an appraised value that is higher than the value that was the subject of the objection unless the
10 reason for an increase was the result of a physical change in the property or caused by an error in the
11 description of the property or data available for the property that is kept by the department and used for
12 calculating the appraised value. In the notification, the department shall state its reasons for revising the
13 classification or appraisal. When the proper appraisal and classification have been determined, the land must
14 be classified and the improvements appraised in the manner ordered by the department.

15 (4) Whether a review as provided in subsection (3) is held or not, the department may not adjust
16 an appraisal or classification upon the taxpayer's objection unless:

17 (a) the taxpayer has submitted an objection on written or electronic forms provided by the
18 department or by checking a box on the notice; and

19 (b) the department has provided to the objector by mail or electronically its stated reason in writing
20 for making the adjustment.

21 (5) A taxpayer's written objection or objection made by checking a box on the notice and
22 supplemental information provided by a taxpayer that elects to check a box on the notice to a classification or
23 appraisal and the department's notification to the taxpayer of its determination and the reason for that
24 determination are public records. The department shall make the records available for inspection during regular
25 office hours.

26 (6) Except as provided in 15-2-302 and 15-23-102, if a property owner feels aggrieved by the
27 classification or appraisal made by the department after the review provided for in subsection (3), the property

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

owner has the right to first appeal to the county tax appeal board and then to the Montana tax appeal board, whose findings are final subject to the right of review in the courts. The appeal to the county tax appeal board, pursuant to 15-15-102, must be filed within 30 days from the date on the notice of the department's determination. A county tax appeal board or the Montana tax appeal board may consider the actual selling price of the property, independent appraisals of the property, negative property features that differentiate the subject property from the department's comparable sales, and other relevant information presented by the taxpayer as evidence of the market value of the property. If the county tax appeal board or the Montana tax appeal board determines that an adjustment should be made, the department shall adjust the base value of the property in accordance with the board's order."

SECTION 2. SECTION 15-10-420, MCA, IS AMENDED TO READ:

"15-10-420. Procedure for calculating levy. (1) (a) Subject to the provisions of this section, a governmental entity that is authorized to impose mills may impose a mill levy sufficient to generate the amount of property taxes actually assessed in the prior year plus one-half of the average rate of inflation for the prior 3 years. The maximum number of mills that a governmental entity may impose is established by calculating the number of mills required to generate the amount of property tax actually assessed in the governmental unit in the prior year based on the current year taxable value, less the current year's newly taxable value, plus one-half of the average rate of inflation for the prior 3 years.

(b) A governmental entity that does not impose the maximum number of mills authorized under subsection (1)(a) may carry forward the authority to impose the number of mills equal to the difference between the actual number of mills imposed and the maximum number of mills authorized to be imposed. The mill authority carried forward may be imposed in a subsequent tax year.

(c) For the purposes of subsection (1)(a), the department shall calculate one-half of the average rate of inflation for the prior 3 years by using the consumer price index, U.S. city average, all urban consumers, using the 1982-84 base of 100, as published by the bureau of labor statistics of the United States department of labor.

(2) A governmental entity may apply the levy calculated pursuant to subsection (1)(a) plus any

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

1 additional levies authorized by the voters, as provided in 15-10-425, to all property in the governmental unit,
2 including newly taxable property.

3 (3) (a) For purposes of this section, newly taxable property includes:

4 (i) annexation of real property and improvements into a taxing unit;

5 (ii) construction, expansion, or remodeling of improvements;

6 (iii) transfer of property into a taxing unit;

7 (iv) subdivision of real property; and

8 (v) transfer of property from tax-exempt to taxable status.

9 (b) Newly taxable property does not include an increase in value that arises because of an
10 increase in the incremental value within a tax increment financing district.

11 (4) (a) For the purposes of subsection (1), the taxable value of newly taxable property includes the
12 release of taxable value from the incremental taxable value of a tax increment financing district because of:

13 (i) a change in the boundary of a tax increment financing district;

14 (ii) an increase in the base value of the tax increment financing district pursuant to 7-15-4287; or

15 (iii) the termination of a tax increment financing district.

16 (b) If a tax increment financing district terminates prior to the certification of taxable values as
17 required in 15-10-202, the increment value is reported as newly taxable property in the year in which the tax
18 increment financing district terminates. If a tax increment financing district terminates after the certification of
19 taxable values as required in 15-10-202, the increment value is reported as newly taxable property in the
20 following tax year.

21 (c) For the purpose of subsection (3)(a)(ii), the value of newly taxable class four property that was
22 constructed, expanded, or remodeled property since the completion of the last reappraisal cycle is the current
23 year market value of that property less the previous year market value of that property.

24 (d) For the purpose of subsection (3)(a)(iv), the subdivision of real property includes the first sale
25 of real property that results in the property being taxable as class four property under 15-6-134 or as
26 nonqualified agricultural land as described in 15-6-133(1)(c).

27 (5) Subject to subsection (8), subsection (1)(a) does not apply to:

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

- 1 (a) school district levies established in Title 20; or
- 2 (b) a mill levy imposed for a newly created regional resource authority.
- 3 (6) For purposes of subsection (1)(a), taxes imposed do not include net or gross proceeds taxes
- 4 received under 15-6-131 and 15-6-132.
- 5 (7) In determining the maximum number of mills in subsection (1)(a), the governmental entity:
- 6 (a) may increase the number of mills to account for a decrease in reimbursements; ~~and~~
- 7 (b) may not increase the number of mills to account for a loss of tax base because of legislative
- 8 action that is reimbursed under the provisions of 15-1-121(7); and
- 9 (c) may not include revenue distributed to a county to provide state property tax assistance
- 10 pursuant to [section-30 31].
- 11 (8) The department shall calculate, on a statewide basis, the number of mills to be imposed for
- 12 purposes of 15-10-109, 20-9-331, 20-9-333, 20-9-360, and 20-25-439. However, the number of mills calculated
- 13 by the department may not exceed the mill levy limits established in those sections. The mill calculation must
- 14 be established in tenths of mills. If the mill levy calculation does not result in an even tenth of a mill, then the
- 15 calculation must be rounded up to the nearest tenth of a mill.
- 16 (9) (a) The provisions of subsection (1) do not prevent or restrict:
- 17 (i) a judgment levy under 2-9-316, 7-6-4015, or 7-7-2202;
- 18 (ii) a levy to repay taxes paid under protest as provided in 15-1-402;
- 19 (iii) an emergency levy authorized under 10-3-405, 20-9-168, or 20-15-326;
- 20 (iv) a levy for the support of a study commission under 7-3-184;
- 21 (v) a levy for the support of a newly established regional resource authority;
- 22 (vi) the portion that is the amount in excess of the base contribution of a governmental entity's
- 23 property tax levy for contributions for group benefits excluded under 2-9-212 or 2-18-703;
- 24 (vii) a levy for reimbursing a county for costs incurred in transferring property records to an
- 25 adjoining county under 7-2-2807 upon relocation of a county boundary;
- 26 (viii) a levy used to fund the sheriffs' retirement system under 19-7-404(3)(b); or
- 27 (ix) a governmental entity from levying mills for the support of an airport authority in existence prior

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

to May 7, 2019, regardless of the amount of the levy imposed for the support of the airport authority in the past.

The levy under this subsection (9)(a)(ix) is limited to the amount in the resolution creating the authority.

(b) A levy authorized under subsection (9)(a) may not be included in the amount of property taxes actually assessed in a subsequent year.

(10) A governmental entity may levy mills for the support of airports as authorized in 67-10-402, 67-11-301, or 67-11-302 even though the governmental entity has not imposed a levy for the airport or the airport authority in either of the previous 2 years and the airport or airport authority has not been appropriated operating funds by a county or municipality during that time.

(11) The department may adopt rules to implement this section. The rules may include a method for calculating the percentage of change in valuation for purposes of determining the elimination of property, new improvements, or newly taxable value in a governmental unit."

SECTION 3. SECTION 15-15-101, MCA, IS AMENDED TO READ:

"15-15-101. County tax appeal board -- meetings and compensation. (1) The board of county commissioners of each county shall appoint a county tax appeal board, with a minimum of three members and with the members to serve staggered terms of 3 years each. The members of each county tax appeal board must be residents of the county in which they serve. A person may not be a member of a county tax appeal board if the person was an employee of the department less than 36 months before the date of appointment.

(2) (a) The members receive compensation as provided in subsection (2)(b) and travel expenses, as provided for in 2-18-501 through 2-18-503, only when the county tax appeal board meets to hear taxpayers' appeals from property tax assessments or when they are attending meetings called by the Montana tax appeal board. Travel expenses and compensation must be paid from the appropriation to the Montana tax appeal board.

(b) (i) The daily compensation for a member is as follows:

(A) \$45 for 4 hours of work or less; and

(B) \$90 for more than 4 hours of work.

(ii) For the purpose of calculating work hours in this subsection (2)(b), work includes hearing tax

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

appeals, deliberating with other board members, and attending meetings called by the Montana tax appeal board.

(3) Office space and equipment for the county tax appeal boards must be furnished by the county. All other incidental expenses must be paid from the appropriation of the Montana tax appeal board.

(4) The county tax appeal board shall hold an organizational meeting each year on the date of its first scheduled hearing, immediately before conducting the business for which the hearing was otherwise scheduled. At the organizational meeting, the members shall choose one member as the presiding officer of the board. The county tax appeal board shall continue in session from July 1 of the current tax year until December 31 of the current tax year to hear protests concerning assessments made by the department until the business of hearing protests is disposed of and may meet after December 31 to hear an appeal at the discretion of the county tax appeal board.

(5) In counties that have appointed more than three members to the county tax appeal board, only three members shall hear each appeal. The presiding officer shall select the three members hearing each appeal.

(6) In connection with an appeal, the county tax appeal board may change any assessment or fix the assessment at some other level or determine eligibility as a primary residence pursuant to [section ~~34~~ 32].

Upon notification by the county tax appeal board, the county clerk and recorder shall publish a notice to taxpayers, giving the time the county tax appeal board will be in session to hear scheduled protests concerning assessments and the latest date the county tax appeal board may take applications for the hearings. The notice must be published in a newspaper if any is printed in the county or, if none, then in the manner that the county tax appeal board directs. The notice must be published by May 15 of the current tax year.

(7) Challenges to a department rule governing the assessment of property or to an assessment procedure apply only to the taxpayer bringing the challenge and may not apply to all similarly situated taxpayers unless an action is brought in the district court as provided in 15-1-406."

SECTION 4. SECTION 15-15-102, MCA, IS AMENDED TO READ:

"15-15-102. Application for reduction in valuation -- certification as primary residence. (1) The

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

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69th Legislature 2025

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SB0287.003.003

1 ~~county tax appeal board may not reduce the~~ valuation of property ~~may not be reduced by the county tax appeal~~
2 ~~board or review eligibility as a primary residence under [section-31 32]~~ unless either the taxpayer or the
3 taxpayer's agent makes and files a written application ~~for reduction~~ with the county tax appeal board.

4 (2) The application ~~for reduction~~ may be obtained at the local appraisal office or from the county
5 tax appeal board. The completed application must be submitted to the county clerk and recorder. The date of
6 receipt is the date stamped on the appeal form by the county clerk and recorder upon receipt of the form. The
7 county tax appeal board is responsible for obtaining the applications from the county clerk and recorder.

8 (3) One application ~~for reduction~~ may be submitted during each valuation cycle. The application
9 must be submitted within the time periods provided for in 15-7-102(3)(a) or [section-33 34].

10 (4) A taxpayer who receives an informal review by the department of revenue as provided in 15-7-
11 102(3)(a)(i) and (3)(a)(ii) or [section-33 34] may appeal the decision of the department of revenue to the county
12 tax appeal board as provided in [section-33 34] or 15-7-102(6). The taxpayer may not file a subsequent
13 application ~~for reduction~~ for the same property with the county tax appeal board during the same valuation
14 cycle.

15 (5) If the department's determination after review is not made in time to allow the county tax appeal
16 board to review the matter during the current tax year, the appeal must be reviewed during the next tax year,
17 but the decision by the county tax appeal board is effective for the year in which the request for review was filed
18 with the department. The application must state the post-office address of the applicant, specifically describe
19 the property involved, and state the facts upon which it is claimed the reduction should be made or the property
20 should be certified as a primary residence."

21
22 **SECTION 5. SECTION 15-15-103, MCA, IS AMENDED TO READ:**

23 **"15-15-103. Examination of applicant -- failure to hear application.** (1) Before the county tax
24 appeal board grants any application or makes any reduction applied for, it shall examine on oath the person or
25 agent making the application with regard to the value of the property of the person or eligibility as a primary
26 residence pursuant to [section-31 32]. A reduction may not be made or a property certified as a primary
27 residence unless the applicant makes an application, as provided in 15-15-102, and attends the county board

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

1 hearing. An appeal of the county board's decision may not be made to the Montana tax appeal board unless
2 the person or the person's agent has exhausted the remedies available through the county board. In order to
3 exhaust the remedies, the person or the person's agent shall attend the county board hearing. On written
4 request by the person or the person's agent and on the written concurrence of the department, the county
5 board may waive the requirement that the person or the person's agent attend the hearing. The testimony of all
6 witnesses at the hearing and the deliberation of the county tax appeal board in rendering a decision must be
7 electronically recorded and preserved for 1 year. If the decision of the county board is appealed, the record of
8 the proceedings, including the electronic recording of all testimony and the deliberation of the county tax appeal
9 board, must be forwarded, together with all exhibits, to the Montana board. The date of the hearing, the
10 proceedings before the county board, and the decision must be entered upon the minutes of the county board,
11 and the county board shall notify the applicant of its decision by mail within 3 days. A copy of the minutes of the
12 county board must be transmitted to the Montana board no later than 3 days after the county board holds its
13 final hearing of the year.

14 (2) (a) Except as provided in 15-15-201, if a county board refuses or fails to hear a taxpayer's
15 timely application for a reduction in valuation of property or eligibility as a primary residence, the taxpayer's
16 application is considered to be granted on the day following the county board's final meeting for that year. The
17 department shall enter the appraisal, ~~or classification,~~ or eligibility as a primary residence sought in the
18 application in the property tax record. An application is not automatically granted for the following appeals:

19 (i) those listed in 15-2-302(1); and
20 (ii) if a taxpayer's appeal from the department's determination of classification or appraisal made
21 pursuant to 15-7-102 was not received in time, as provided for in 15-15-102, to be considered by the county
22 board during its current session.

23 (b) The county board shall provide written notification of each application that was automatically
24 granted pursuant to subsection (2)(a) to the department, the Montana board, and any affected municipal
25 corporation. The notice must include the name of the taxpayer and a description of the subject property.

26 (3) The county tax appeal board shall consider an independent appraisal provided by the taxpayer
27 if the appraisal meets standards set by the Montana board of real estate appraisers and the appraisal was

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

1 conducted within 6 months of the valuation date. If the county tax appeal board does not use the appraisal
2 provided by the taxpayer in conducting the appeal, the county board shall provide to the taxpayer the reason for
3 not using the appraisal."

4
5 **SECTION 6. SECTION 15-16-101, MCA, IS AMENDED TO READ:**

6 **"15-16-101. Treasurer to publish notice -- manner of publication.** (1) Within 10 days after the
7 receipt of the property tax record, the county treasurer shall publish a notice specifying:

8 (a) that one-half of all taxes levied and assessed will be due and payable before 5 p.m. on the next
9 November 30 or within 30 days after the notice is postmarked and that unless paid prior to that time the amount
10 then due will be delinquent and will draw interest at the rate of 5/6 of 1% a month from the time of delinquency
11 until paid and 2% will be added to the delinquent taxes as a penalty;

12 (b) that one-half of all taxes levied and assessed will be due and payable on or before 5 p.m. on
13 the next May 31 and that unless paid prior to that time the taxes will be delinquent and will draw interest at the
14 rate of 5/6 of 1% a month from the time of delinquency until paid and 2% will be added to the delinquent taxes
15 as a penalty; and

16 (c) the time and place at which payment of taxes may be made.

17 (2) (a) The county treasurer shall send to the last-known address of each taxpayer a written notice,
18 postage prepaid, showing the amount of taxes and assessments due for the current year and the amount due
19 and delinquent for other years. The written notice must include:

20 (i) the taxable value of the property;
21 (ii) the total mill levy applied to that taxable value;
22 (iii) itemized city services and special improvement district assessments collected by the county;
23 (iv) the number of the school district in which the property is located;
24 (v) the amount of the total tax due itemized by mill levy that is levied as city tax, county tax, state
25 tax, school district tax, and other tax and, for a primary residence, the total amount of state property tax

26 assistance received under [section-30 31];

27 (vi) an indication of which mill levies are voted levies, including voted levies to impose a new mill

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

levy, to increase a mill levy that is required to be submitted to the electors, or to exceed the mill levy limit provided for in 15-10-420;

(vii) except as provided in subsection (2)(c), an itemization of the taxes due for each mill levy and a comparison to the amount due for each mill levy in the prior year; and

(viii) a notice of the availability of all the property tax assistance programs available to property taxpayers, including the state property tax assistance provided for in [section ~~30~~ 31], the intangible land value assistance program provided for in 15-6-240, the property tax assistance programs under Title 15, chapter 6, part 3, and the residential property tax credit for the elderly under 15-30-2337 through 15-30-2341.

(b) If a tax lien is attached to the property, the notice must also include, in a manner calculated to draw attention, a statement that a tax lien is attached to the property, that failure to respond will result in loss of property, and that the taxpayer may contact the county treasurer for complete information.

(c) The information required in subsection (2)(a)(vii) may be posted on the county treasurer's website instead of being included on the written notice.

(3) The municipality shall, upon request of the county treasurer, provide the information to be included under subsection (2)(a)(iii) ready for mailing.

(4) The notice in every case must be given as provided in 7-1-2121. Failure to publish or post notices does not relieve the taxpayer from any tax liability. Any failure to give notice of the tax due for the current year or of delinquent tax will not affect the legality of the tax.

(5) If the department revises an assessment that results in an additional tax of \$5 or less, an additional tax is not owed and a new tax bill does not need to be prepared."

SECTION 7. SECTION 15-17-125, MCA, IS AMENDED TO READ:

"15-17-125. Attachment of tax lien and preparation of tax lien certificate. (1) (a) The county treasurer shall attach a tax lien no later than the first working day in August to properties on which the taxes are delinquent and for which proper notification was given as provided in 15-17-122 and subsection (4) of this section. Upon attachment of a tax lien, the county is the possessor of the tax lien unless the tax lien is assigned pursuant to 15-17-323.

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

(b) The county treasurer may not attach a tax lien to a property on which taxes are delinquent but for which proper notice was not given.

(2) After attaching a tax lien, the county treasurer shall prepare a tax lien certificate that must contain:

(a) the date on which the property taxes became delinquent;

(b) the date on which a property tax lien was attached to the property;

(c) the name and address of record of the person to whom the taxes were assessed;

(d) a description of the property on which the taxes were assessed;

(e) a separate listing of the amount of the delinquent taxes, penalties, interest, and costs;

(f) a statement that the tax lien certificate represents a lien on the property that may lead to the issuance of a tax deed for the property;

(g) a statement specifying the date on which the county or an assignee will be entitled to a tax deed; and

(h) an identification number corresponding to the tax lien certificate.

(3) The tax lien certificate must be signed by the county treasurer. A copy of the tax lien certificate must be filed by the treasurer in the office of the county clerk. A copy of the tax lien certificate must also be mailed to the person to whom the taxes were assessed, at the address of record, together with a notice that the person may contact the county treasurer for further information on property tax liens.

(4) Prior to attaching a tax lien to the property, the county treasurer shall send notice of the pending attachment of a tax lien to the person to whom the property was assessed. The notice must include the information listed in subsection (2), state that the tax lien may be assigned to a third party, and provide notice of the availability of all the property tax assistance programs available to property taxpayers, including the state property tax assistance provided for in [section ~~30~~ 31], the property tax assistance programs under Title 15, chapter 6, part 3, and the residential property tax credit for the elderly under 15-30-2337 through 15-30-2341. The notice must have been mailed at least 2 weeks prior to the date on which the county treasurer attaches the tax lien.

(5) The county treasurer shall file the tax lien certificate with the county clerk and recorder."

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

1
2 NEW SECTION. SECTION 8. STATE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE ACCOUNT. (1) THERE IS A STATE
3 PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE ACCOUNT IN THE STATE SPECIAL REVENUE FUND ESTABLISHED IN 17-2-102. THE REVENUE
4 ALLOCATED TO THE ACCOUNT AS PROVIDED IN [SECTION 15] MUST BE DEPOSITED IN THE ACCOUNT AND DISTRIBUTED AS
5 PROVIDED IN THIS SECTION.

6 (2) (A) AT THE END OF EACH FISCAL YEAR, IF THE BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT EXCEEDS \$50 MILLION, THE
7 DEPARTMENT SHALL DETERMINE THE AMOUNT OF PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE PER PRIMARY RESIDENCE BY
8 SUBTRACTING THE AMOUNTS LISTED IN SUBSECTION (2)(C) AND DIVIDING THE REMAINDER BY THE TOTAL NUMBER OF
9 PRIMARY RESIDENCES CERTIFIED PURSUANT TO [SECTION ~~34~~ 32].

10 (B) BY AUGUST 31 OF EACH YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DISTRIBUTE TO EACH COUNTY THE PROPERTY
11 TAX ASSISTANCE PER PRIMARY RESIDENCE MULTIPLIED BY THE NUMBER OF PRIMARY RESIDENCES WITHIN THE COUNTY.
12 THE COUNTY SHALL DEPOSIT THE MONEY IN THE ACCOUNT IN WHICH PROPERTY TAX REVENUE IS HELD AND USE THE
13 DISTRIBUTION TO PROVIDE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE PURSUANT TO [SECTION ~~30~~ 31].

14 (C) THE DEPARTMENT MAY RETAIN 2% OF THE REVENUE ALLOCATED TO THE ACCOUNT FOR
15 ADMINISTERING THE CERTIFICATION OF PRIMARY RESIDENCES UNDER [SECTION ~~34~~ 32] AND SHALL RETAIN \$100,000 FOR
16 APPEALS GRANTED UNDER [SECTION ~~33~~ 34].

17 (3) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PROVIDE EACH COUNTY WITH A LIST OF PROPERTY IN THE COUNTY THAT THE
18 DEPARTMENT CERTIFIES PURSUANT TO [SECTION ~~34~~ 32] QUALIFIES AS A PRIMARY RESIDENCE TO ENABLE THE COUNTY
19 TREASURER TO ADMINISTER THE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE.

20 (4) A PAYMENT REQUIRED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION MAY BE WITHHELD IF, FOR MORE THAN 90 DAYS, A
21 LOCAL GOVERNMENT FAILS TO:

22 (A) FILE A FINANCIAL REPORT REQUIRED BY 15-1-504;

23 (B) REMIT ANY AMOUNTS COLLECTED ON BEHALF OF THE STATE AS REQUIRED BY 15-1-504; OR

24 (C) REMIT ANY OTHER AMOUNTS OWED TO THE STATE OR ANOTHER TAXING JURISDICTION.

25
26 SECTION 9. SECTION 15-38-302, MCA, IS AMENDED TO READ:

27 **"15-38-302. Natural resources projects state special revenue account created -- revenue**

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

(7) The governor may authorize transfers from the budget stabilization reserve fund provided for in 17-7-130. The governor may authorize \$3 of transfers from the fund for each \$1 of reductions in spending but may not authorize a transfer that would cause the balance of the budget stabilization reserve fund to be less than 6% of all general revenue appropriations in the second year of the biennium."

Section 29. Section 19-3-315, MCA, is amended to read:

"19-3-315. Member's contribution to be deducted. (1) (a) (i) Except as provided in subsection (2), for members hired on or before June 30, 2025, each member's contribution is 7.9% of the member's compensation.

(ii) Except as provided in subsection (2), for members hired on or after July 1, 2025, each member's contribution is 8.9% of the member's compensation.

(b) The board shall annually review the required contributions and recommend future adjustments to the legislature as needed to maintain the amortization schedule set by the board for the payment of the system's unfunded liability.

(2) (a) ~~Each~~ For members hired on or before June 30, 2025, each member's contribution must be reduced to 6.9% on January 1 following the system's annual actuarial valuation if the valuation determines that reducing the employee contribution pursuant to this subsection (2)(a) and reducing the employer contribution pursuant to 19-3-316(4) would not cause the system's amortization period to exceed 25 years.

(b) For members hired on or after July 1, 2025, each member's contribution must be reduced to 7.4% on January 1 following the system's annual actuarial valuation if the valuation determines that reducing the employee contribution pursuant to this subsection (2)(b) and reducing the employer contribution pursuant to 19-3-316(4) would not cause the system's amortization period to exceed 25 years.

(3) Payment of salaries or wages less the contribution is full and complete discharge and acquittance of all claims and demands for the service rendered by members during the period covered by the payment, except their claims to the benefits to which they may be entitled under the provisions of this chapter.

(4) Each employer, pursuant to section 414(h)(2) of the federal Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C. 414(h)(2), shall pick up and pay the contributions that would be payable by the member under subsection (1) or

(2) for service rendered after June 30, 1985.

(5) (a) The member's contributions picked up by the employer must be designated for all purposes of the retirement system as the member's contributions, except for the determination of a tax upon a distribution from the retirement system.

(b) In the case of a member of the defined benefit plan, these contributions must become part of the member's accumulated contributions but must be accounted for separately from those previously accumulated.

(c) In the case of a member of the defined contribution plan, these contributions must be allocated as provided in 19-3-2117.

(6) The member's contributions picked up by the employer must be payable from the same source as is used to pay compensation to the member and must be included in the member's wages, as defined in 19-1-102, and compensation. The employer shall deduct from the member's compensation an amount equal to the amount of the member's contributions picked up by the employer and remit the total of the contributions to the board."

Section 30. Section 19-3-316, MCA, is amended to read:

"19-3-316. Employer contribution rates. (1) Each employer shall contribute to the system. Except as provided in subsection (2), the employer shall pay as employer contributions 6.9% of the compensation paid to all of the employer's employees plus any additional contribution under subsection (3), except for those employees properly excluded from membership. Of employer contributions made under this subsection for both defined benefit plan and defined contribution plan members, a portion must be allocated for educational programs as provided in 19-3-112. Employer contributions for members under the defined contribution plan must be allocated as provided in 19-3-2117.

(2) Local government and school district employer contributions must be the total employer contribution rate provided in subsection (1) minus the state contribution rates under 19-3-319.

(3) (a) Subject to subsection (4), each employer shall contribute to the system an additional employer contribution equal to the percentage specified in subsection (3)(b) of the compensation paid to all of

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

the employer's employees, except for those employees properly excluded from membership.

(b) ~~The percentage of compensation to be contributed under subsection (3)(a) is 1.27% for fiscal year 2014 and increases by 0.1% each fiscal year through fiscal year 2024.~~ For fiscal years beginning after June 30, ~~2024-2025~~ 2024, the percentage of compensation to be contributed under subsection (3)(a) is 2.27%. For fiscal years beginning after June 30, 2027, there is a ~~0.2%~~ 0.1% increase each fiscal year through the fiscal year ending June 30, ~~2037~~ 2047. For fiscal years beginning after June 30, ~~2037~~ 2047, the percentage of compensation to be contributed under subsection (3)(a) is 4.27%.

(4) (a) The board shall annually review the additional employer contribution provided for under subsection (3) and recommend adjustments to the legislature as needed to maintain the amortization schedule set by the board for payment of the system's unfunded liabilities.

(b) The employer contribution required under subsection (3) terminates on January 1 following the board's receipt of the system's actuarial valuation if the actuarial valuation determines that terminating the additional employer contribution pursuant to this subsection (4)(b) and reducing the employee contribution pursuant to 19-3-315(2) would not cause the amortization period to exceed 25 years."

NEW SECTION. SECTION 31. PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE FOR PRIMARY RESIDENCES. (1) A COUNTY SHALL PROVIDE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE TO OWNERS OF PRIMARY RESIDENCES CERTIFIED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE PURSUANT TO ~~[SECTION 31-32]~~. THE ASSISTANCE IS PROVIDED WITH FUNDING FROM THE STATE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE ACCOUNT DISTRIBUTED TO THE COUNTY AS PROVIDED IN ~~[SECTION 8]~~.

(2) (A) ~~EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (2)(B), THE COUNTY TREASURER SHALL PROVIDE THE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE DISTRIBUTED PURSUANT TO [SECTION 8] TO EACH PRIMARY RESIDENCE BY LISTING THE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE AMOUNT AS A CREDIT ON THE PROPERTY TAX BILL AS PROVIDED IN 15-16-101(2)(A)(V).~~

(B) ~~IF THE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE CALCULATED PURSUANT TO [SECTION 8(2)] EXCEEDS THE PROPERTY TAX BILLED FOR AN INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY, THE COUNTY MAY RETAIN THE REVENUE THAT EXCEEDS THE PROPERTY TAX BILLED.~~

(3) ~~THE OWNER OF A PRIMARY RESIDENCE THAT RECEIVES PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE UNDER THIS SECTION IS NOT PROHIBITED FROM RECEIVING PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE UNDER ANOTHER PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE~~

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

1 PROGRAM.

2 (4) STATE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO COUNTIES PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION MAY NOT
3 AFFECT THE MAXIMUM MILL CALCULATION IN 15-10-420.

4

5 NEW SECTION. SECTION 32. CERTIFICATION OF PRIMARY RESIDENCE FOR STATE PROPERTY TAX

6 ASSISTANCE -- RULEMAKING -- DEFINITION. (1) TO RECEIVE STATE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE PURSUANT TO [SECTION
7 ~~30~~ 31], THE OWNER OF A PRIMARY RESIDENCE SHALL APPLY TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR CERTIFICATION OF THE PRIMARY
8 RESIDENCE.

9 (2) (A) TO RECEIVE STATE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE FOR THE TAX YEAR IN WHICH THE APPLICATION IS
10 FIRST MADE, THE OWNER SHALL APPLY ELECTRONICALLY OR BY MAIL ON A FORM PRESCRIBED BY THE DEPARTMENT AND
11 POSTMARKED BY MARCH 1. APPROVED APPLICATIONS RECEIVED ELECTRONICALLY OR POSTMARKED AFTER MARCH 1
12 APPLY TO THE FOLLOWING TAX YEAR.

13 (B) ONCE APPROVED, THE CERTIFICATION REMAINS EFFECTIVE UNTIL:

14 (I) THERE IS A CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP OF THE PROPERTY;

15 (II) THE OWNER NO LONGER USES THE DWELLING AS A PRIMARY RESIDENCE; OR

16 (III) THE OWNER APPLIES FOR STATE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE FOR A DIFFERENT PRIMARY RESIDENCE.

17 (C) IF CERTIFICATION IS TERMINATED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (2)(B), THE OWNER SHALL SUBMIT A NEW
18 APPLICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT TO REESTABLISH THE CERTIFICATION.

19 (D) AN APPLICATION FOR STATE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE MUST BE SUBMITTED ON A FORM PRESCRIBED
20 BY THE DEPARTMENT AND MUST CONTAIN:

21 (I) A WRITTEN DECLARATION MADE UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT THE APPLICANT OWNS AND
22 MAINTAINS THE LAND AND IMPROVEMENTS AS THE PRIMARY RESIDENCE. THE APPLICATION MUST STATE THE PENALTY
23 PROVIDED FOR IN [SECTION ~~32~~ 33].

24 (II) THE GEOCODE OR OTHER PROPERTY IDENTIFIER FOR THE PRIMARY RESIDENCE FOR WHICH THE
25 APPLICANT IS REQUESTING THE STATE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE;

26 (III) THE SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER OF THE APPLICANT; AND

27 (IV) ANY OTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED BY THE DEPARTMENT THAT IS RELEVANT TO THE APPLICANT'S

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

ELIGIBILITY.

(3) (A) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (3)(B), CLASS FOUR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY OWNED BY AN ENTITY IS NOT ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE THE STATE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE.

(B) THE TRUSTEE OF A GRANTOR REVOCABLE TRUST MAY APPLY FOR STATE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE FOR A PRIMARY RESIDENCE ON BEHALF OF THE TRUST IF THE DWELLING MEETS THE DEFINITION OF A PRIMARY RESIDENCE FOR THE GRANTOR.

(4) THE DEPARTMENT MAY ADOPT RULES, PREPARE FORMS, AND MAINTAIN RECORDS THAT ARE NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION.

(5) (A) FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION AND [SECTIONS ~~32 AND 33~~ and 34], "PRIMARY RESIDENCE" MEANS A CLASS FOUR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY:

(I) THAT IS A SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLING UNIT, UNIT OF A MULTIPLE-UNIT DWELLING, TRAILER, MANUFACTURED HOME, OR MOBILE HOME;

(II) IN WHICH AN OWNER CAN DEMONSTRATE THE OWNER OWNED AND LIVED FOR AT LEAST 7 MONTHS OF THE YEAR;

(III) THAT IS THE OWNER'S ONLY PRIMARY RESIDENCE;

(IV) FOR WHICH THE VALUE OF THE RESIDENTIAL DWELLING IS \$1 MILLION OR LESS; AND

(V) FOR WHICH THE OWNER MADE PAYMENT OF THE ASSESSED MONTANA PROPERTY TAXES.

(B) AN OWNER WHO CANNOT MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF SUBSECTION (5)(A)(II) BECAUSE THE OWNER'S PRIMARY RESIDENCE CHANGED DURING THE TAX YEAR TO ANOTHER PRIMARY RESIDENCE MAY STILL QUALIFY IF THE OWNER PAID THE MONTANA PROPERTY TAXES WHILE RESIDING IN EACH PRIMARY RESIDENCE FOR A TOTAL OF AT LEAST 7 CONSECUTIVE MONTHS OF THE TAX YEAR. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH RULES FOR DETERMINING THE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE WHEN THE PRIMARY RESIDENCES ARE IN DIFFERENT COUNTIES.

NEW SECTION. SECTION 33. STATE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE -- PENALTY FOR FALSE OR FRAUDULENT APPLICATION. A PERSON WHO FILES A FALSE OR FRAUDULENT CERTIFICATION OF PRIMARY RESIDENCE FOR STATE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE UNDER [SECTION ~~31~~ 32] IS SUBJECT TO CRIMINAL PROSECUTION UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF 45-7-202 AND MAY BE PROHIBITED FROM CLAIMING STATE PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE FOR UP TO 10 YEARS. IF FALSE

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

OR FRAUDULENT PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE HAS BEEN ISSUED BY THE COUNTY, THE AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE GRANTED MAY BE RECOVERED AS ANY OTHER TAX OWED THE COUNTY. IF PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE BECOMES DUE AND OWING, THE DEPARTMENT MAY ISSUE A WARRANT FOR DISTRAINT AS PROVIDED IN TITLE 15, CHAPTER 1, PART 7.

NEW SECTION. SECTION 34. APPEAL OF DENIAL OF CERTIFICATION OF PRIMARY RESIDENCE. (1) (A) IF THE DEPARTMENT DENIES AN APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION OF A PRIMARY RESIDENCE, THE OWNER MAY REQUEST AN INFORMAL REVIEW OF THE DENIAL BY SUBMITTING AN OBJECTION ON WRITTEN OR ELECTRONIC FORMS PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR THAT PURPOSE IN A MANNER PRESCRIBED BY THE DEPARTMENT. THE OBJECTION MUST BE MADE NO LATER THAN 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF THE DENIAL NOTIFICATION.

(B) THE PROPERTY OWNER MAY REQUEST THAT THE DEPARTMENT CONSIDER EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES TO GRANT AN APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION OF A PRIMARY RESIDENCE. EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO EXTRAORDINARY, UNUSUAL, OR INFREQUENT EVENTS THAT ARE MATERIAL IN NATURE AND OF A CHARACTER DIFFERENT FROM THE TYPICAL OR CUSTOMARY, AND THAT ARE NOT EXPECTED TO RECUR.

(C) AFTER THE INFORMAL REVIEW, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DETERMINE THE CORRECT STATUS OF THE APPLICATION AND NOTIFY THE TAXPAYER OF ITS DETERMINATION BY MAIL OR ELECTRONICALLY. IN THE NOTIFICATION, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL STATE ITS REASONS FOR ACCEPTING OR DENYING THE APPLICATION.

(2) IF A PROPERTY OWNER IS AGGRIEVED BY THE DETERMINATION MADE BY THE DEPARTMENT AFTER THE REVIEW PROVIDED FOR IN SUBSECTION (1), THE PROPERTY OWNER HAS THE RIGHT TO FIRST APPEAL TO THE COUNTY TAX APPEAL BOARD AND THEN TO THE MONTANA TAX APPEAL BOARD, WHOSE FINDINGS ARE FINAL SUBJECT TO THE RIGHT OF REVIEW IN THE COURTS. AN APPEAL TO THE COUNTY TAX APPEAL BOARD, PURSUANT TO 15-15-102, MUST BE FILED WITHIN 30 DAYS FROM THE DATE ON THE NOTICE OF THE DEPARTMENT'S DETERMINATION. IF THE COUNTY TAX APPEAL BOARD OR THE MONTANA TAX APPEAL BOARD DETERMINES THAT THE RESIDENCE SHOULD QUALIFY AS A PRIMARY RESIDENCE, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PROVIDE TO THE PROPERTY OWNER THE AMOUNT OF PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE DUE FROM THE AMOUNT RETAINED PURSUANT TO [SECTION 8].

Section 35. Section 19-20-609, MCA, is amended to read:

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION; AND

(C) \$7.5 MILLION FROM THE MONTANA EARLY CHILDHOOD STATE SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

(2) THERE IS APPROPRIATED THE FOLLOWING AMOUNTS FROM THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2026, FOR THE PURPOSES OUTLINED IN THOSE ACCOUNTS:

(A) \$10 MILLION FROM THE MONTANA WATER DEVELOPMENT STATE SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION; AND

(B) \$10 MILLION FROM THE LOCAL BRIDGE STATE SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION; AND

(C) \$10 MILLION FROM THE MONTANA EARLY CHILDHOOD STATE SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

(3) THE LEGISLATURE INTENDS THAT THE APPROPRIATIONS IN SUBSECTION (2) BE CONSIDERED PART OF THE ONGOING BASE FOR THE NEXT LEGISLATIVE SESSION.

NEW SECTION. SECTION 44. CODIFICATION INSTRUCTION. (1) [SECTIONS 14 THROUGH 18 AND SECTION 37 38] ARE INTENDED TO BE CODIFIED AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF TITLE 17, AND THE PROVISIONS OF TITLE 17 APPLY TO [SECTIONS 14 THROUGH 18 AND SECTION 37 38].

(2) [SECTION 19] IS INTENDED TO BE CODIFIED AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF TITLE 85, CHAPTER 1, PART 3, AND THE PROVISIONS OF TITLE 85, CHAPTER 1, PART 3, APPLY TO [SECTION 19].

(3) [SECTION 20] IS INTENDED TO BE CODIFIED AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF TITLE 60, CHAPTER 2, PART 2, AND THE PROVISIONS OF TITLE 60, CHAPTER 2, PART 2, APPLY TO [SECTION 20].

(4) [SECTION 21] IS INTENDED TO BE CODIFIED AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF TITLE 17, CHAPTER 7, AND THE PROVISIONS OF TITLE 17, CHAPTER 7, APPLY TO [SECTION 21].

(5) [SECTION 24] IS INTENDED TO BE CODIFIED AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF TITLE 90, CHAPTER 6, AND THE PROVISIONS OF TITLE 90, CHAPTER 6, APPLY TO [SECTION 24].

(6) [SECTION 8 AND SECTIONS 30-31 THROUGH 33 34] ARE INTENDED TO BE CODIFIED AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF TITLE 15, CHAPTER 6, AND THE PROVISIONS OF TITLE 15, CHAPTER 6, APPLY TO [SECTION 8 AND SECTIONS 30

Amendment - 2nd Reading/2nd House-tan - Requested by: Bill Mercer - (H) Committee of the Whole

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Rebecca Power,

SB0287.003.003

1 31 THROUGH ~~33~~ 34].

2 (7) [SECTIONS 22, 23, AND SECTIONS 25 THROUGH 27] ARE INTENDED TO BE CODIFIED AS AN INTEGRAL
3 PART OF TITLE 52, CHAPTER 2, AND THE PROVISIONS OF TITLE 52, CHAPTER 2, APPLY TO [SECTIONS 22, 23, AND
4 SECTIONS 25 THROUGH 27].

5
6 COORDINATION SECTION. SECTION 45. COORDINATION INSTRUCTION. (1) IF EITHER SENATE BILL NO.
7 56 OR HOUSE BILL NO. 924, OR BOTH, AND [THIS ACT] ARE PASSED AND APPROVED, AND IF EITHER OR BOTH AND [THIS
8 ACT] CONTAIN A SECTION THAT AMENDS 19-3-316, THEN THE SECTIONS AMENDING 19-3-316 IN SENATE BILL NO. 56
9 AND HOUSE BILL NO. 924 ARE VOID.

10 (2) IF HOUSE BILL NO. 924 AND [THIS ACT] ARE PASSED AND APPROVED, AND IF BOTH CONTAIN A SECTION
11 THAT AMENDS 19-20-609, THEN THE SECTION AMENDING 19-20-609 IN HOUSE BILL NO. 924 IS VOID.

12
13 COORDINATION SECTION. SECTION 46. COORDINATION INSTRUCTION. IF BOTH SENATE BILL NO. 324
14 AND [THIS ACT] ARE PASSED AND APPROVED, AND IF SENATE BILL NO. 324 AMENDS 61-3-321 TO PROVIDE FOR A
15 TRANSFER OR DEPOSIT OF FUNDS INTO THE BETTER LOCAL BRIDGE FUND, THEN [SECTION 5 OF SENATE BILL NO. 324],
16 ESTABLISHING THE BETTER LOCAL BRIDGE FUND, IS VOID AND FUNDS INSTEAD TRANSFER OR DEPOSIT INTO THE
17 DISTRIBUTION PORTION OF THE MONTANA GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY TRUST PROVIDED FOR IN [SECTION 14].

18
19 NEW SECTION. SECTION 47. Effective date. [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

20 - END -