



## OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK COUNCIL ACTION FORM

**SUBJECT:** RESOLUTION 23-11094 Establishing Legislative  
Priorities for the 2023 Montana State Legislature's  
68th Session

**Council Meeting Date:** January 23, 2023

**Vote:** APPROVED 10-0, Shaw absent/tardy

**Shaw, Gulick, Neese, Owen, Joy, Choriki, Tidswell,  
Purinton, Boyett, Rupsis, Mayor Cole**

Item 1. M.

**City Council Regular**

**Date:** 01/23/2023  
**Title:** Resolution Establishing Legislative Priorities for the 2023 Montana State Legislature's 68th Session  
**Presented by:** Chris Kukulski, City Administrator  
**Department:** City Hall Administration  
**Presentation:** No  
**Legal Review** No

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**RECOMMENDATION**

The City Administrator recommends the Council adopt the attached Resolution for the Montana State Legislature's 2023 Session.

**BACKGROUND (Consistency with Adopted Plans and Policies, if applicable)**

The 68th Montana State Legislature began January 2, 2023. It is important to identify legislative priorities to guide city administration, staff, local elected officials, and our lobbyist. It is intentionally broad to help guide city staff, elected officials and our lobbying team of Aimee Grmoljez and Steve Turkiewicz.

Included within our legislative priorities are our two closest legislative partners, the Montana League of Cities and Towns (MLCT) and the Montana Infrastructure Coalition (MIC). The MLCT is an incorporated, nonpartisan, nonprofit association of 127 Montana municipalities. The League's sole purpose is a cooperative improvement of municipal government in Montana. It acts as a clearing house through which the municipalities cooperate for their mutual benefit. The MIC is a volunteer group representing over 100 industry, labor, and trade associations, local governments and business entities. Billings is an active board member in both organizations. These groups have come together to provide reliable information to state and local decision-makers and their constituents regarding the need for public safety and infrastructure investment.

The following priorities for the 2023 Legislative Session:

1. **Public Safety** - Support legislation provided enhanced safety, health and security for Billings residents; fight drug abuse, domestic violence, human trafficking and associated crime; reduce vagrancy, homelessness and increase resources for mental health services.

This support includes the following draft legislation from the Criminal Justice Oversight Council (CJOC).

- CJOC 1.2 - Revises sentencing laws for theft and thematically-related crimes.
- CJOC 2.2 - Addresses matters regarding recovery residences, also known as sober living homes.
- CJOC 3.2 - Creates a separate definition for persistent felony offender under supervision.
- CJOC 4 - Revises sentencing laws for disorderly conduct.
- CJOC 5.2 - Makes theft of a motor vehicle assessed at any value a felony.
- CJOC 6 - Creates diversion agreement program for certain drug offenses.

2. **Economic Development** - Support legislation that facilitates private investment in Billings.

3. **Infrastructure** - Support legislation that increases investments in infrastructure critical to supporting our economy.

4. **Shift Tax Burden** - Support legislation shifting the tax burden from Billings property owners to users of government services, where appropriate.

5. **MLCT/Self Governing Powers** - Support, in general, the Montana League of Cities and Towns Legislative Resolutions (see attached).

6. **MIC** - Support, in general, Montana Infrastructure Coalition legislative efforts.

Res. 23-11094

COUNCIL ACTION	Approved
10-0, Show Absent/Tardy	
JAN 23 2023	
Jb	
CITY CLERK	

**ALTERNATIVES**

City Council may:

- Approve; or,
- Not Approve

## FISCAL EFFECTS

Creating our legislative agenda has little direct cost. Success or failure throughout the 2023 legislative process typically has significant fiscal impacts, both short and long term.

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## Attachments

Resolution Establishing Legislative Priorities for the 2023 Montana State Legislature's 68th Session

## RESOLUTION 23-11094

### A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR THE 2023 MONTANA STATE LEGISLATURE'S 68<sup>th</sup> SESSION

**WHEREAS**, the 68<sup>th</sup> Montana State Legislature began January 2, 2023. It is important to identify legislative priorities to guide city administration, staff, local elected officials, and our lobbyist; and

**WHEREAS**, included within our legislative priorities are our closest legislative partners, the Montana League of Cities and Towns (MLCT), the Montana Infrastructure Coalition (MIC) and the county attorney's office. The MLCT is an incorporated, nonpartisan, nonprofit association of 127 Montana municipalities. The League's sole purpose is the cooperative improvement of municipal government in Montana. It acts as a clearinghouse through which the municipalities cooperate for their mutual benefit. The MIC is a volunteer group representing over 100 industry, labor, and trade associations, local governments, and business entities. Billings has active board representation in both organizations. These groups have come together to provide reliable information to state and local decision-makers and their constituents regarding the need for public safety and infrastructure investment; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BILLINGS, MONTANA CITY COUNCIL** adopts the following priorities for the 2023 Legislative Session:

1. **Public Safety - Support legislation providing enhanced safety, health and security for Billings residents; fight drug abuse, domestic violence, human trafficking and associated crime; reduce vagrancy, homelessness and increase resources for mental health services.**

**This support includes the following draft legislation from the Criminal Justice Oversight Council (CJOC).**

- o CJOC 1.2 - Revises sentencing laws for theft and thematically-related crimes.
- o CJOC 2.2 - Addresses matters regarding recovery residences, also known as sober living homes.
- o CJOC 3.2 - Creates a separate definition for persistent felony offender under supervision.

- CJOC 4 - Revises sentencing laws for disorderly conduct.
- CJOC 5.2 - Makes theft of a motor vehicle assessed at any value a felony.
- CJOC 6 - Creates diversion agreement program for certain drug offenses.

2. Economic Development - Support legislation that facilitates private investment in Billings.
3. Infrastructure - Support legislation that increases investments in infrastructure critical to supporting our economy.
4. Shift Tax Burden - Support legislation shifting the tax burden from Billings property owners to users of government services, where appropriate.
5. MLCT/Self Governing Powers - Support, in general, the Montana League of Cities and Towns Legislative Resolutions (see attached).
6. MIC - Support, in general, Montana Infrastructure Coalition legislative efforts.

The Billings, Montana City Council hereby recognizes, concurs, and supports the priorities expressed herein.

PASSED, ADOPTED and APPROVED on this 23rd day of January, 2023.

CITY OF BILLINGS



DocuSigned by:  
BY: William A. Cole  
William A. Cole, Mayor

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:  
BY: Denise R. Bohlman  
Denise R. Bohlman, City Clerk

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coleb@billingsmt.gov

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Mayor

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Denise R. Bohlman



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bohlmand@billingsmt.gov

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City Clerk



City of Billings

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Toni Keehner

keehnert@billingsmt.gov

Deputy City Clerk

City Clerk

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