

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

GREG GIANFORTE
GOVERNOR



KRISTEN JURAS
LT. GOVERNOR

May 16, 2025

The Honorable Brandon Ler
Speaker of the House
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59620

The Honorable Matt Regier
President of the Senate
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Speaker Ler and President Regier:

Generally operated by a nonprofit organization or a governmental organization, senior citizen centers provide seniors with access to services, including meals, educational programs, socialization opportunities, and recreational activities.

House Bill 182 creates a new government program at the Department of Commerce to establish an infrastructure grant program and distribute \$5 million in grants to "nonprofit corporations for property acquisition, construction, space acquisition, remodeling, repairs, and the purchase of appliances and equipment" for senior citizen centers.

Regardless of the merit of this new program, the Department of Commerce is not the right agency to administer it.

And regardless of where this new program could be housed within state government, House Bill 182's \$5 million price tag is too much at this time. Furthermore, I signed into law Senate Bill 104 in April, which expands access for nonprofits to low-cost capital loans for certain projects and added \$1 billion of additional capacity to the Montana Facility Finance Authority. Under Senate Bill 104, any facility owned, used, or supported by a qualified nonprofit is eligible for cost-effective capital financing. As senior citizen centers would qualify for this funding, I believe Senate Bill 104 is the better way to support them.

Our Montana Constitution requires us to balance our budget. In 2021 and 2023, I am proud that we worked together to deliver balanced budgets that not only were fiscally responsible, but also allowed us to seize the opportunity to let hardworking Montanans keep more of what they earn.

The budget proposal I sent to the Legislature for the 2025 Legislative Session was fiscally conservative, keeping spending below inflation.

The budget and other bills with hefty price tags that the Legislature passed, however, are not fiscally responsible. Therefore, I will keenly review the budget and spending bills the Legislature passed, making some difficult decisions to protect taxpayers and their hard-earned resources. Hardworking Montanans expect us to be fiscally responsible.

I appreciate the sponsor's intent with House Bill 182, and Senate Bill 104 provides a better avenue to support these facilities with access to capital without impacting the state budget so significantly.

Therefore, 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 182: "AN ACT CREATING A SENIOR CITIZEN CENTER GRANT PROGRAM TO FUND CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR PROJECTS, AND EQUIPMENT PURCHASES; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; ALLOWING APPROPRIATIONS TO CONTINUE INTO THE 2027 AND 2029 BIENNIUMS; PROVIDING AN EXCLUSION FROM CERTAIN PARTS IN TITLE 75; PROVIDING LEGISLATIVE INTENT; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND A TERMINATION DATE."

Sincerely,



Greg Gianforte
Governor

Enclosure

cc: Legislative Services Division
Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State