

Exhibit 7

Letter from Chairman Bill Gallagher to House Judiciary Comm.
(March 12, 2013)

EXHIBIT 5
DATE 3/2/2013
SB 153



MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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March 12, 2013

Bill Gallagher, Chairman
Bob Lake, Vice Chairman
Kirk Bushman, Commissioner
Travis Kavulla, Commissioner
Roger Koopman, Commissioner

The Honorable Krayton Kerns, Chairman
Members of the Judiciary Committee
Montana State House of Representatives
PO Box 200500
Helena MT 59620-0500

RE: SB 153

Dear Chairman Kerns:

The Montana Public Service Commission maintains its opposition to SB 153, a bill that proposes an immediate plan to realign PSC district boundaries, changing the county composition of four of the five districts.

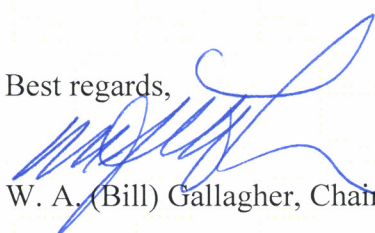
While the commission appreciates both the efforts and the intentions of the bill's sponsor, it has become evident that the complexity of the issues raised by this legislation require more time, research and deliberation than can be sufficiently addressed by the Montana State Legislature at this time.

We strongly believe that now is not the time to be addressing this matter. There are no clearly demonstrated, current population discrepancies existing between the districts. The explosive growth in the eastern (Bakken) regions of the state renders the 2010 census figures upon which this bill is based of very little value. By the time of the next elections, these census numbers will be 6 years old, and will not take into account any population shifts that are have, or are likely to occur. In an effort to correct perceived inequities, SB 153 may in fact create new and larger inequities.

Therefore, the PSC respectfully recommends that the House Judiciary Committee lay this legislation on the table. This is an issue that requires long and careful study, using population data that is known to be timely and accurate.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,


W. A. (Bill) Gallagher, Chairman, MT PSC