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Media Release

Billings Chamber Supports Eastern Montana Infrastructure Needs

For Immediate Release

Billings, MT, December 8, 2014: The Billings Chamber of Commerce announces its support of 16 eastern Montana counties requesting \$90 million from state funds to begin the repairs needed to eastern Montana infrastructure. The Chamber recognizes that the Bakken Oil Boom can only continue for Montana as long as our communities can continue to grow to accommodate the needs. These funds are integral to upgrade, repair or replace essential infrastructure, and the needs result directly from the Oil Boom.

Specifically, the request states that eastern Montana counties want the 2015 legislature to “Approve legislation that increases the State of Montana’s investment in eastern Montana for infrastructure, transportation, fire, emergency services, and law enforcement. Utilize a combination of the outstanding credit rating of the state and its impressive cash reserves to make a significant impact on our communities.” The \$90 million requested will be leveraged with other sources of funding to improve infrastructure.

“The need is tremendous,” states Bruce MacIntyre, Director of Business Advocacy and Government Affairs for the Billings Chamber. “We are all eager to profit and grow as a result of the Bakken, but there are limits. Many of these communities must see enhancements if this boom is going to be a positive impact to them.”

Major upgrade investments include water, waste water, law enforcement facilities, transportation projects, roads and bridges. The letter from the counties states, “The impacts of energy development continue to affect every aspect of life within our eastern Montana communities, from wastewater to roads, classrooms to emergency rooms, wheat fields to courtrooms. Every sector is impacted, and the demands are tremendous.”

Every community and county is represented, and the Billings Chamber stands with these counties in their request.

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The Billings Chamber of Commerce represents you, our 1,200 members who employ more than 44,000 people. We help you grow your bottom line by connecting you to opportunities and advocating for your business and our community.