

1.Name & office you are seeking

Lyn Hellegaard, House District 89

2.The 2023 Legislature passed several bills to encourage housing development by revising land use laws (subdivision), reducing regulatory barriers, and streamlining processes.

SB 382 – Montana Land Use Planning Act.

SB 131 – Revise exempt subdivision review timelines.

HB 211 – Revise local subdivision review process.

What are your opinions of the legislation listed? What specific policy changes would you recommend/support to further encourage housing development in our community?

I voted for all the above listed bills. I believe the legislature needs to continue its work to reduce taxes and regulations. The legislature should use whatever influence/leverage they have with local/county governments to also reduce taxes and regulations that hinder housing development.

3.Missoula is an employment anchor in western Montana, but a quarter of Missoula’s workforce lives outside Missoula County. The 2019 Missoula County Housing Action Plan states, “Underlying high housing costs is an undersupply of around 2,400 housing units in Missoula County”.

What specific policies would you pursue to address the community’s workforce housing deficit and ongoing needs?

The Legislature needs to work on a new paradigm which creates an economy that blends tourist with a manufacturing and extraction mix. This would create the jobs that allow for homeownership. Missoula has been subsidizing house for decades and the situation only gets worse.

4.During past few years as home prices have soared, rental rates have seen a similar trend. Locally some people have voiced concerns that short-term rentals are reducing available rental units and increasing rental rates.

What is your opinion on short-term rental regulation?

I believe that an individual owning one short term rental property should not incur additional regulations or taxes, since many times they need the income to maintain their home ownership. That being said, when an individual or corporation own short term rentals, they should be taxed at a commercial rate.

5.Montana policymakers must address the disconnect between growth in our communities and inadequate infrastructure.

What legislative changes would you support or propose to help communities invest in infrastructure to keep up with the demands of growing local economies and populations?

I believe the most affect change would come from voters who insist the local government prioritize police, fire and infrastructure first. I would support legislation that would increase good paying jobs, reducing regulation and property taxes.

6. Property taxes are the primary funding source for local government services and infrastructure and help to fund public services, infrastructure, and education. Increasing mill levies and increasing property value assessments have left many property owners demanding relief.

What policies would you support to provide permanent property tax relief to Montana homeowners?

The legislature should put pressure on the Land Board to increase revenues from state lands. In the past this was how schools were funded. When checking my property tax bill, removing this would cut my taxes in half. Implementing these policies would support my position in Questions #3 and #5.

7. State Law provides for tax increment financing (TIF) and urban renewal districts. TIF is used within urban renewal districts to combat blight and promote economic development. However, critics of TIF say that these urban renewal districts can be in place for many years, and TIF diverts property tax revenue away from schools and county governments.

What is your opinion of TIF? What changes to TIF statutes would you recommend, if any?

We also need to require any implementation, extension or new debt on URDs be placed on the ballot for community approval. We also need to look at the local governments "land Banking" practices.

8. One in five homes in Montana is serviced by an onsite septic system. If properly installed and maintained, septic systems are a safe and cost-effective means of waste disposal for homeowners and businesses. Some regulations on septic systems are enforced by local health departments, and enforcement is inconsistent. For instance, how bedrooms are counted to determine what size of system is necessary and how nonconforming systems are handled varies.

Will you support legislation that brings greater consistency to the enforcement of regulations on existing septic systems?

Yes, I would also support legislation that would apply to new septic systems and replacement of septic systems located in city limits. As connecting to the municipal sewer systems can be an obstacle for low-income or elderly homeowners staying in the homes.

9. Housing development outside of areas with access to municipal water systems frequently rely on exempt appropriations statutes for water supply.

What are your thoughts on current statutes? What, if any, changes would you support?

They need to be improved, as currently written and enforced they are in direct conflict to affordable housing. One developer had to pay \$252,000 up front for a 14-house subdivision water allocation, which was later denied and those funds yet to be returned.

Government is also using these regulations to deny housing developments within the city, but approving developments out in the county. While professing to want affordable housing and densification.

I would support changes that treated all development equally, not require up-front-fees, streamline development approvals and reduce the number of permits and associated fees.

I would also support exploring how the recent Supreme Court ruling on Impact Fees might be used to improve or stop this practice, especially when preferential water permitting is given to elected officials, which is denied to local developers.

10. **Do you support Montana's existing code regarding exemptions on discrimination in housing (49-2-305)?**

Yes

11. REALTORS® believe that private property rights are fundamental to our free-market system and are a cornerstone upon which this nation was founded. Our United States and Montana Constitutions recognize and protect the right to own property. A strong economy depends upon preserving the right to freely own, use, and transfer real property.

If elected, what approach will you take to balancing private property rights with public interests?

I will oppose any unconstitutional legislation. I believe there needs to be a balance between the property owner and neighbor's interests. I believe the best results occur when developers and neighbors communicate and come to agreeable solutions. Unfortunately, we've been seeing an escalation in illegal takings through zoning, overly burdensome regulations and permitting through state agencies and local governments which needs to be addressed.

12. Treasurer's Name, Address and Phone Number

Lyn Hellegaard, 3828 Bellecrest Dr., Missoula, MT/ 406-531-2990

13. Will you accept PAC contributions?

Yes