



*Rep. Caleb's House Bill 337 is an extremist bill that would ban all abortion in Montana and possibly even common forms of birth control.*

## **This Week at the Montana Legislature**

### **April 11, 2021**

### **"I would need an abortion to save my life."**

In her recent letter to the Billings Gazette editor, Soraya Ramhormoz outlined what attacks on abortion (such as House Bill 337) could mean for her and many other Montanans. Soraya's story, as well as a few other recent pieces of Montana news, can be found below in our Recommended Reading list but her call to action is a refrain you know well by now: "I urge Montanans to contact their legislators and ask them to oppose HB 337 and other bills that would put people like me in danger."

As we enter the final few weeks of the 67th Legislative Session, we find ourselves in a constant state of Hurry Up & Wait. Bills that we have been fighting over the past few weeks or months will soon be up for their final votes on the House and Senate floors. And though we can't always tell you when that will be, we encourage you to call and email first thing each morning!

Also coming up this week is [a 'Decompression Session' hosted by our friends at Montana Human Rights Network](#): "This legislative session has been particularly difficult and exhausting for the transgender, non-binary, two-spirit and gender-non-conforming communities within Montana. Come, create community, and decompress from this

upsetting and harmful legislation. The Montana Human Rights Network will be hosting a Decompression Session this coming Wednesday, April 14th, at 6 PM. Decompressing will involve safe space to voice fears and frustrations, as well as space to foster hope for the future. This event will be taking place online via zoom."

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## Take Action

**406-444-4800**

The Legislative Information Desk is open for calls weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

[You can also message your legislators 24/7 using the online form.](#)

### **HB 337 is Extremist Legislation 101**

[House Bill 337 is an attempt to give a fertilized egg, a zygote, or a fetus all of the same legal rights that you have as a Montanan.](#) That means zero access to safe abortion and potentially even a ban on common forms of birth control such as the pill, IUDs, or emergency contraception — even for victims of rape or incest. This bill is nothing more than a blatant extremist attempt at banning abortion altogether.

This bill is up for one of its final votes on the Senate floor tomorrow afternoon so please call *and* email your senator first thing on Monday morning!

### **Montana health insurance coverage *must* cover Montana health care!**

Rep. Jane Gillette wants to make it impossible for low-income Montanans to get health insurance coverage for abortion — even if they paid for their insurance with their own money! And we all know that the legal right to abortion means nothing if you can't afford to access it. Please call and [email your senator](#) telling them to vote No on HB 229!

### **Unsurprising, but no less disgusting**

[Senate Bill 280, sponsored by Sen. Carl Glimm \(R - Columbia Falls\)](#), adds a completely unnecessary barrier to correcting the gender listed on a birth certificate: requiring not only that an individual undergo gender-affirmation surgery, but that a judge confirms it. This is [another harmful piece of legislation in a long](#)

[line of anti-trans bills](#) and it's up for it's final vote on Monday afternoon. Please call your House representative first thing in the morning and tell them to vote No on SB 280!

### **Medicaid Expansion works for Montana — leave it alone**

[Sen. Cary Smith's SB 100](#) could kick low-income Montanans off of Medicaid and SNAP. Tell House Human Services Committee members and your House rep to vote No on this attempt to mess with a good thing!

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## **This Week**

**[HB 337: Constitutional amendment to define a person by Rep. Caleb Hinkle \(R\), House District 68,](#)** is an attempt to give a *fertilized egg, a zygote, or a fetus* all of the same legal rights that you have as a Montanan. This bill means zero access to safe abortion — even for victims of rape or incest. And although some Republican legislators are arguing otherwise, this bill language makes clear that access to common forms of birth control such as the pill, IUDs, or emergency contraception may be jeopardized. House Bill 337 will arrive on the Senate floor on Monday. **Please call and email your senator first thing Monday morning! You can call 406-444-4800 or [send them a message through the legislature's website](#) telling them to vote No on Rep. Hinkle's HB 337.**

**HB 229: Prohibiting health insurance plans offered through the Health Insurance Exchange from covering abortion services [by Rep. Jane Gillette \(R\), House District 64,](#)** would mean that people who rely on the Affordable Care Act's Health Insurance Exchange would not have any options to get coverage for abortion. Banning this coverage from Exchange plans would place safe, legal abortion out of reach for the lowest income families in Montana. HB 229 passed out of Senate Judiciary Committee but hasn't yet made it to the Senate floor so **there's still time to call 406-444-4800 and [email your senator](#) to tell them to vote No on HB 229!**

**SB 315: Adopt the Born-Alive Infant Protection Act by Sen. David Howard (R), Senate District 29,** is the policy bill version of [HB 167](#), which we previously opposed. As a reminder, House Bill 167 would place anti-abortion language on the next general election ballot and leave it up to Montanans to vote for or against our constitutional right to abortion and personal privacy. Because SB 315 is a regular policy bill, it is up to legislators to decide if this false, stigmatizing, anti-abortion narrative should be made law.

[HB 427: Provide for youth health protection by John Fuller \(R\), House District 8](#), is the reincarnation of House Bill 113 — the anti-trans bill that prohibits surgical care for trans, non-binary, or Two-Spirit youth in Montana. This is yet another attempt by legislators to insert themselves into the personal, private health care decisions. Similar to HB 112, this bill took a month to get from the House floor through the Senate Judiciary Committee, but both are receiving their final votes in the Senate any day now. **Please call [and message your senator](#) to tell them to vote No on House Bill 427.**

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## Recommended Reading

### [Anti-abortion bill could kill me](#)

"Pregnancy can be extremely dangerous for some people like me with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome. A pregnancy could kill me and a fetus would not survive to viability. If I were to become pregnant despite the use of multiple forms of contraception, I would need an abortion to save my life."

### ***New bill would make it harder for transgender Montanans to amend their birth certificates***

"The sexual assault and homicide rate against transgender people, and especially against transgender women of color, is the highest in the country," said Shawn Reagor, a lobbyist for the Montana Human Rights Network. "Oftentimes, our ability to obtain a job, housing or public services and to even stay alive is contingent on our ability to maintain private, medically relevant information. Having a birth certificate that doesn't match your gender identity or how the world sees you is extremely dangerous."

### [Do as I say, not as I do: The mixed messaging of Montana's leaders](#)

"Meanwhile, we absolutely must protect our First Amendment by establishing a state religious freedom bill, despite the freedom being enshrined in the state and federal constitutions. Apparently, freedom to practice and live your mostly deeply held beliefs are under siege, while at the same time, these same lawmakers want to dictate how doctors treat those who are transgender or who believe abortion is acceptable and legal. Belief about God needs protection, belief about who you are needs outlawing.

Nope, no irony to see here."

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Questions about these bills or how you can help us fight them? [Contact Julia!](#)

[Visit our website.](#)

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