

YMCA YOUTH LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

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\_\_\_\_\_ Bill Number \_\_\_\_\_

Legislative Action:

Introduced by: Grace Zitzer  
Authored by: Carter Marsh

House Committee: \_\_\_\_\_  
House: \_\_\_\_\_  
Senate Committee: \_\_\_\_\_  
Senate: \_\_\_\_\_  
Governor: \_\_\_\_\_

Delegation: Southwestern Montana Family YMCA

Referred to Committee:

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1 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE STATE OF MONTANA  
2 DNRC TO CREATE AVALANCHE CENTERS AROUND THE STATE"

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4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE MONTANA YMCA YOUTH LEGISLATURE:

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6 **Section 1:** Purpose: Many lives in Montana are taken each year due to backcountry users being  
7 uneducated about avalanches and snow conditions. With the State of Montana DNRC starting  
8 avalanche centers in Montana, the amount of education for backcountry use in Montana will be  
9 increased, thus saving lives.

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11 **Section 2:** Definitions: Backcountry- areas of mountains where there is no ski patrol or mountain  
12 safety to keep people safe. Education- Something in which lawyers are lacking. 6 month  
13 positions- positions will be in effect from November 1<sup>st</sup> to April 30<sup>th</sup>.

14  
15 **Section 3:** Each Avalanche center will be staffed with one 12 month position and two 6 month  
16 positions. The 12 month position must be staffed by an individual who has a Snow Science  
17 degree, Natural Recourses degree with an emphasis in snow, or at least two years of experience  
18 in a snow study job.

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20 **Section 4:** Starting in May the full time individual must complete an end of the year report,  
21 containing yearlong snow pack conditions, avalanche reports, fatality reports, accident reports, as  
22 well as a log of the avalanche education that was provided to the community during this time.  
23 The report will be due to the unit manager by August 31<sup>st</sup>.

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25 **Section 5:** Each avalanche center will have their own website. One this website there will be a  
26 log of snowpack conditions, accident reports, and fatality reports. Between December 1<sup>st</sup> and  
27 April 15<sup>th</sup> the avalanche center will put out an avalanche forecast everyday for the duration of the  
28 time period, and it will be posted on the website. This will allow for the public to check snow  
29 conditions as well as see how the snow has been acting in each district. In order to produce an  
30 avalanche forecast, avalanche center personnel will have to be out in the field every day during  
31 this period.

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33 **Section 6:** The avalanche centers will be operational 7 days a week during the December 1<sup>st</sup>  
34 through April 15<sup>th</sup> period. Before and after this period the center will be operational only 5 days  
35 per week  
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37 **Section 7:** The avalanche centers will be set throughout avalanche prone areas in the state. The  
38 Central Land Office will receive two centers, one in the Dillon Unit, and one in the Helena Unit.  
39 The Western Land Office will receive two, one in the Missoula Unit, and one in the Kalispell  
40 Unit. The last center will be located in the Bozeman Unit. These DNRC Units selected for the  
41 avalanche centers will be spread out to strategically cover the snowpack throughout the majority  
42 of the state's avalanche prone areas.  
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44 **Section 8: Fiscal Note-** In order to pay for the positions created in this bill a \$5.00 increase will  
45 be put on Montana's State Land permits for residents, and a \$15.00 increase will be put on non-  
46 residents. This permit allows people to recreate on Montana's state lands. This increased fee on  
47 the permit will help save lives in Montana. However a cap of 60 hours of pay per week per  
48 employee will be put into place during the December 1<sup>st</sup> –April 1<sup>st</sup> period. A cap of 40 pay hours  
49 per week per employee will be put into place for the rest of the year. Donations will also be  
50 accepted. Also Polaris Industries, Backcountry Access and Black Diamond have agreed to  
51 donate 3% of their profits towards the avalanche centers.  
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53 **Section 9:** This bill will become effective immediately after passage. The full time positions  
54 must be filled by September 30<sup>th</sup> 2009.  
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