



MONTANA RENEWABLE ENERGY ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 673

Missoula, MT 59806

(406) 214-9405

[www.montanarenewables.org](http://www.montanarenewables.org)

January 28, 2019

**To: House Energy, Technology, and Federal Relations Committee**

**Regarding: House Bill 267, Establish metering requirements for utilities**

Chairman Zolnikov and Members of the House Energy, Technology, and Federal Relations Committee:

I am writing to express the Montana Renewable Energy Association's (MREA) support for House Bill 267. MREA represents solar, small wind, micro-hydro, and other renewable energy technology installers, as well as consumers and supports of these technologies. We appreciate the sponsor bringing this bill forward to ensure any future deployment of smart metering technology is done appropriately and with the end-user's best interests in mind.

Smart meters and the information they are able to provide create potential for a greater understanding of energy use by the end-user, as well as by utilities. This information creates opportunities for both the end-user and the utility to study and manage energy use, saving the end-user money. Smart meters are a key element of any future smart grid development, which will harmonize with energy efficiency programs and unlock distributed generation as an asset for utilities. Smart meters can help end-users and utilities shift and/or reduce demand on the grid, which results in greater efficiencies and lower costs across the entire system and customer base.

Critical to the deployment of these technologies is data access and data privacy. Not only should data be made secure simply by principle, but ensuring data privacy will increase the acceptance of the new technology. Energy use information is valuable, and should be treated as such. Importantly, the end-user themselves should have unequivocal access to their own data. As mentioned above, the information provided to the user can help them make decision on how to use energy in their home that can save them money and affect their impact on the grid. Without easy and timely access to that information, they will be unable to harness the benefits of the metering technology which will defeat the purpose of its deployment. This bill should support and ensure data access by the end-user.

Thank you,

Andrew J. Valainis  
Executive Director