

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

GREG GIANFORTE
GOVERNOR



KRISTEN JURAS
LT. GOVERNOR

May 14 2021

The Honorable Mark Blasdel
President of the Senate
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59601

The Honorable Wylie Galt
Speaker of the House
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59601

Dear President Blasdel and Speaker Galt:

In accordance with the power vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Montana, I hereby veto Senate Bill 108, "AN ACT GENERALLY REVISING LAWS RELATED TO LOCAL BOARDS OF HEALTH; ALLOWING FOR A CITIZEN INITIATIVE TO AMEND OR REPEAL LOCAL HEALTH BOARD ACTIONS; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE".

In summary, this legislation permits individuals residing within the jurisdiction of a local health board to, by petition, request an election on whether to repeal or amend a local health board action. SB 108 also establishes parameters for elections of this nature.

Despite the best intentions of SB 108 to address isolated instances of overreach by local public health officials during the pandemic, I am concerned that the bill places significant hardships on Montana counties and local election administrators. Furthermore, I remain confident that HB 121 and HB 257 – two measures already signed into law – achieve the sponsor's goal of increasing accountability and bringing greater oversight of local public health actions, while mitigating the ongoing challenges created by community-wide regulations, orders, directives, and mandates.

For these reasons, I veto SB 108.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Greg", is written over a printed name and title.

Greg Gianforte
Governor

cc: Legislative Services Division
Secretary Christi Jacobsen