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**2022-23 MFPE Legislative Program**

**Approved by 2022 Annual conference**

**Public Programs & Services**

MFPE **supports**legislation to

* Fund a collectively bargained state and university employee pay plan that pays at minimum 100% of market rate, includes career ladders and location pay, and minimizes employee out-of-pocket health insurance costs.
* Provide public employees with additional paid family and bereavement leave.
* Fund full staffing of state and local government services.
* Adopt more robust longevity increments
* Adopt cost of living adjustment increments.

MFPE **opposes**legislation to

* Privatize public programs and services.
* Limit or deny opportunities for public employees to serve in public office.
* Cap state employee salaries and/or benefits.
* Further diminish staffing of state and local government services.
* Reclassify state employee positions.

**Public Education**

MFPE **supports**legislation to

* Provide state funded public education opportunities to all pre-k school age children.
* Fund an annualized inflationary increase in state funding of special education.
* Qualify eligible classified school employees for unemployment insurance during school year breaks.
* Increase annual stipends for school district employees who earn National Board Certification or other nationally recognized advanced certification.
* Include state-funded stipends as pensionable.
* Provide state funding to help build, maintain, and improve public schools and facilities.
* Provide state funding to pay competitive salaries
* Mandate compulsory enrollment from age 6 to age 18 or completion of high school diploma or equivalent.
* Provide 2-years of tuition-free education options at Montana’s publicly funded institutions.
* Increase funding for public higher education.
* Extend ANB funding for all students up to 20 years of age.
* Make the Montana University System 6-mill levy permanent.
* Adequately fund mental health services in public schools

MFPE **opposes**legislation to

* Invest public revenues in private schools, including charter and home schools.
* Dictate school accreditation and teacher licensure standards, curricula, and methods of instruction.
* Authorize school districts to employ non-licensed persons as professional educators.
* Diminish or repeal Montana teacher tenure.
* Circumvent the federal Gun Free Schools Act.
* Infringe on the constitutional authority of education boards.

**Union Rights**

MFPE **supports** legislation to

* Protect employees' security, safe working conditions, and health.

MFPE **opposes**legislation to

* Impede the right of all public and private sector employees to organize and bargain collectively.
* Repeal fair share negotiated provisions and/or exclusive representation.
* Prohibit payroll deduction of union dues.

**Taxation**

MFPE **supports**legislation to

* Create and maintain a state tax system that is adequate, equitable, balanced, simple, progressive, and universal.

MFPE **opposes** legislation to

* Eliminate, cap, or significantly reduce property or income taxes without replacement revenue.

**Retirement**

MFPE **supports** legislation to

* Increase state funding of the Montana University System Retirement Plan.
* Guarantee the continued stability of Montana’s public pensions systems

MFPE **opposes**legislation to

* Eliminate or diminish public employee defined benefit retirement plans.
* Reduce or eliminate guaranteed annual benefit adjustments in public employee pensions.

**Health Care**

MFPE **supports**legislation to

* Expand Medicaid to all eligible Montana citizens without work requirements.
* Create a mandatory statewide public prek-12 school employee health care insurance risk pool and minimize employee out-of-pocket.
* Permit school districts to enroll in the state employee health insurance risk pool,
* Expand access to state health clinics.
* Expand access to mental healthcare.
* Guarantee access to affordable, quality healthcare.

MFPE **opposes** legislation to

* Create or implement public health policies that lack support of healthcare professionals.

**Constitutional and Voting Rights**

MFPE **supports**legislation to

* Require rigorous petition gathering processes of efforts to qualify 3rd parties for general election ballot status.
* Modernize Montana elections, including promoting mail balloting, expanding polling locations, and adopting online and/or automatic voter registration.
* Provide access to candidate information.

MFPE **opposes**legislation to:

* Deny or impede any eligible citizen’s right to register and vote.
* Deny or impede any citizen’s right and ability to participate in our Democracy.
* Infringe on the constitutional separation of powers outlined in Article III.

**Public Lands**

MFPE **opposes** legislation to:

* Transfer federal public property to state or private ownership
* restrict or eliminate public access to state and federal land and water.