

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

GREG GIANFORTE
GOVERNOR



KRISTEN JURAS
LT. GOVERNOR

May 16, 2025

The Honorable Brandon Ler
Speaker of the House
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59620

The Honorable Matt Regier
President of the Senate
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Speaker Ler and President Regier:

History has proven that the free market system produces goods and services better than any alternative. A free market incents innovation and fosters the efficient allocation of resources, goods, and services.

While I appreciate the bill sponsor's intent to protect users of bail bond services from bondsmen who may not adequately disclose the cost or terms of a bail bond, House Bill 729 impedes the free market and inhibits competition by mandating minimum insurance premiums for bail bonds. The price-fixing provisions of House Bill 729 are substantially similar to House Bill 808 that I vetoed in 2023.

Fixing minimum premiums that bail bond providers must collect is not an effective or appropriate solution to addressing bad actors.

In 2023, we worked together to strengthen oversight of and qualifications for bail bondsmen when I signed into law House Bill 62.

Finally, the Commissioner of Securities and Insurance has the ability to investigate and revoke the licenses of any bondsmen who abuse their authority. In the past, the Commissioner has exercised this authority when necessary to protect the public.

Therefore, in accordance with the power vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Montana, I hereby veto House Bill 729: "AN ACT REVISING SURETY BAIL BOND INSURANCE LAWS TO REQUIRE THE PRODUCER TO COLLECT A MINIMUM OF 10% OF THE GUARANTEED AMOUNT OF THE SURETY APPEARANCE

Speaker Ler and President Regier
May 16, 2025
Page 2

BOND; PROVIDING FOR THE COLLECTION OF A MINIMUM PREMIUM IN FULL AND
FOR A RECEIPT TO BE PROVIDED; AND AMENDING SECTION 33-26-106, MCA.”

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Greg Gianforte", is written over the printed name and title. To the right of the signature is a large, stylized blue star or asterisk symbol.

Greg Gianforte
Governor

Enclosure

cc: Legislative Services Division
Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State