

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

WRITTEN BY

This is how things are going on the so-called “conservative” side of politics in the United States in general, and strongly so in Montana. *Cascade County is not an exception.*

The following quote is an opinion piece published prior to the 2024 Montana Primary Election, entitled “They’re RINOS”, written by Jeff H. Larsen, of Kalispell, MT, published in the *Hungry Horse News* (May 22, 2024):

“Don’t be fooled by the PAC of liberals calling themselves Conservatives4MT sending out post cards attacking our well known conservative Republicans. This PAC is nothing more than a liberal pack of RINOs. A little research on this PAC shows they raised around \$180,000. Dark money PACs including Guarantee PAC out of Washington D.C. and the MHA PAC State Fund out of Helena, donated the majority of the money to this PAC. MHA stands for Montana Hospital Association. The PAC also received \$25,000 from well known Flathead County RINO Bruce Tutvedt.

Instead of attacking actual conservatives, this liberal PAC of RINOs should join all of us to get rid of Tester and Biden and the radical Tester/Biden agenda that is destroying our country right before our eyes. The Tester/Biden disastrous border invasion, inflation, out of control spending, war on energy and attacks on women's sports is destroying our country.

Please reject liberal Conservatives4MT PAC pack of RINOs. Vote for true conservatives in the primary, which include Regier, SD5; Kelly, HD9; Mitchell, HD5, Byrne HD11. Also please join me and thousands and thousands of Montanans in rejecting Tester and Biden and their radical liberal agenda. —Jeff H. Larsen, Kalispell”

Jeff H. Larsen has described the problem with Republican politics in Montana. The phenomenon is not limited to the Conservatives4MT PAC(political action committee), Kalispell and Flathead County. This describes liberal *Republican* PACs across the nation and it is happening in many counties in Montana. That is not to say that all Republican PACs are liberal, but it is to say, *do some research on those PACs who are sending you mailers on behalf of their favorite candidates.* This is exactly how the liberal Political Action Committees (PACs) are funding campaigns for liberal-minded Republicans, i.e. “Republicans In Name Only” (RINOs).

The fact is, the very word “conservative” is a yet another victim of left-wing word hijacking and so is the word “moderate”. The liberals, and outright leftists, have caught on to using terms like these because they know Republicans have traditionally been recognized as the “conservative party”, and they simply use these terms to get votes. It’s been duly noted that everyone, Republican or Democrat, suddenly becomes conservative in an election year. Then once the election is over, they go back to their left-wing politics to the disheartening of their constituents.

Unfortunately for traditional conservatives or constitutional conservatives, there is no



Jason Ellsworth
(R – SD43 of Hamilton)
jason.ellsworth@legmt.gov



Bruce “Butch” Gillespie
(R – SD9, *Etheridge*)
bruce.gillespie@legmt.gov



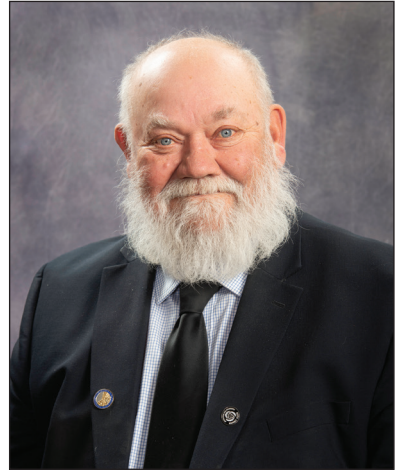
Gregg Hunter
(R – SD15 of Glasgow)
gregg.hunter@legmt.gov



Josh Kassmier
(R – SD13, Fort Benton)
josh.kassmier@legmt.gov



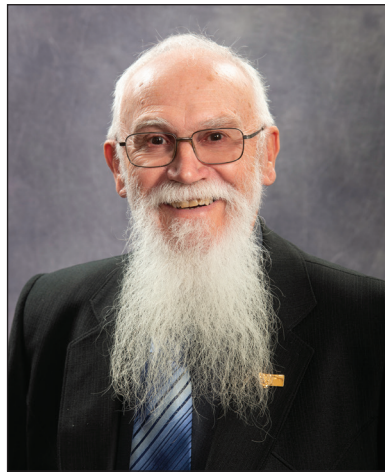
Gayle Lammers
(R – SD21, Hardin)
gayle.lammers@legmt.gov



Denley Loge
(R – SD45, St. Regis)
denley.loge@legmt.gov



Wendy McKamey
(R – SD12, Great Falls)
wendy.mckamey@legmt.gov



Russ Tempel
(R – SD14, Chester)
russ.tempel@legmt.gov



Shelley Vance
(R – SD34, Belgrade)
shelley.vance@legmt.gov

The problem is these “Republicans” are identifying as Democrats this session.

longer any consistency in the Republican Party regarding conservatism. The so-called moderate Republicans are at the very least as liberal as Democrats were just a decade ago. They're not even as conservative as former President John F. Kennedy was, who was considered to be quite liberal in his day. That alone reflects just how far left the United States of America has slid over the course of the past 60 years.

It is indeed fortunate that Republicans were able to come together to overcome the leftist Biden and Tester political machines, but don't rest on the idea that Republicans are in control if you're conservative minded. Hold those people accountable who ran as conservative Republicans. Be the watchdog public. Stealing a quote from the Department of Homeland Security: "If you see something,

say something!” The cavalry is not coming to save you from the leftists. That’s your job. Study the Constitution of the United States — it’s actually a pretty short document. But learn what it means, not just what someone tells you it means. *Due diligence* has become a cliché, but only because Americans have become so desperately dependent on their government.

The latest example of RINOs getting elected in Montana was recently published in the Montana Sentinel (January 7, 2025) the headline reading ***Nine “Republican” Senators Cross The Aisle And Commit A RINOsurrection To Give Democrats De Facto Control Of The Montana Senate.*** The article goes on to state,

“Republicans hold a 32-18 majority in the Montana Senate. Still, recently, nine Republicans betrayed their principles and their voters by siding with Democrats during a critical Senate rules vote on day one of the 2025 legislative session. Day two just concluded, and all that’s been accomplished is the swearing-in ceremony followed by betrayal. The Senate and House have not held hearings, and the people’s work is not getting done because of the nine Senators.”

Noteworthy for Cascade County is recently elected Senator, former Montana House Member, Josh Kassmier, and veteran Senator, Wendy McKamey, who is making a career of the Montana Legislature; she is generally liberal leaning – as reflected by her voting record.

Don't forget Montana's State House of Representatives! There are plenty of RINOs there, too.

Montana is rated as a **purple** state by the American Conservative Union, the host of the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC). Don't be fooled. The reason Montana





is not rated *red* even though the state has a Republican majority in the legislature is because, aside from quite a strong presence of Democrats in the Treasure State, we also have an elected presence of RINOs, as this week's performance in electing the Democrat Senator Pat Flowers to the Montana Senate President position reveals.

What does this mean for Cascade County? Conservatives did not fare well in the 2024 County Election process. Keep a close eye on the Cascade County Commission. We already know two of the three Commissioners do not necessarily appreciate the Montana Code

Annotated; they would likely shred it if given the opportunity and in some ways they have. To be fair, a critique of newly elected County Commissioner Eric Hinebauch will not be a focus of this article. Giving new officials an opportunity to prove themselves is only fair; guilt by association isn't always the best rule of thumb, but we shall see. Performance in his last official position with the Great Falls City Commission may not be indicative of how he will perform as a County Commissioner.

What can you do to help? Write to your Representatives in both the Senate and

the House, and write to them often. In the future (which means now) get involved with conservative civic groups in your area and help them fight for your constitutionally conservative values. There are many conservative groups, but there is truly very little involvement from the general public. Most of the groups that do the heavy lifting have fewer than 20 people each; they need your support. If you can't personally be present at meetings, give them monetary support. If you cannot support these groups monetarily, your presence and personal help is invaluable. Don't leave your liberties and values up to the hard work of others. Get involved! 🇺🇸