EXHIBIT 4
DATE 1/30/07
HB 2 - approp / Edu

JAN 30, 2007

To the Committee, Joint Subcommittee Education Appropriations

From: Sheila Stearns, Commissioner of Higher Education

The Board of Regents of the Mt. University System strongly support the budget requests of our colleagues in K-12, the Office of Public Instruction, particularly in the area of comprehensive, unified data systems. We in higher education will absolutely commit to making our systems fully able to link to each other.

Accountability and competitiveness in Montana education, and Montana's future, depend on good information to see where educational success is happening, and where there are weaknesses that must be improved.

These budget requests promote accountability links from local schools through the university system and to the Department of Labor and Industry. I request that my testimony be entered into the record.

Thank you,

Sheila M Stearns