



Montana *independent* Bankers

March 8, 2021

Senator Steve Daines
United States Senator (R-MT)
30 West 14th Street, Ste. 206
Helena, MT 59601

Dear Steve:

As you know, I am the Executive Director of the Montana Independent Bankers Association (MIB). MIB represents and acts on behalf of Montana's community banks, their employees, and customers.

First, congratulations on your appointment to the Senate Banking Committee. This is a very exciting development for MIB's membership.

Second, as we have discussed with you previously, if there was ever a time that was ripe to provide community banks with federal regulatory relief and certainty when it comes to banking cannabis proceeds, it is this year and it is this Congress.

While cannabis use remains illegal under federal law, a growing number of states have approved adult use of cannabis for recreational purposes and/or for medical use. As you know, in November of 2020, Montana's voters approved the legal use of marijuana, including possessing, using and growing up to 1 ounce for personal use.

As you can imagine, the conflict between state and federal law as to the legality of cannabis use has created very significant legal and compliance concerns for Montana's banks in regard to banking cannabis-related businesses and cannabis proceeds. Montana's banks need certainty as to banking cannabis-related legal businesses (CRLBs).

To this end, MIB is very pleased to learn that you are supporting the SAFE Banking Act. Montana's community banks recognize the need for a legal and regulatory safe harbor so that they may lawfully serve CRLB's and their service providers. And, the SAFE Act provides the protection and guidance needed for MIB's member banks to do just that.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue. You can be assured the MIB endorses the SAFE Banking Act. Should you have any questions or should you need more information on the difficulties Montana banks are having with banking cannabis, please feel free to give me a call to discuss.

In addition, I am pleased to take this opportunity to invite you to speak at our annual state convention in 2021. The convention will be July 22-24th, at the Great Northern Hotel in Billings. I know our membership would be honored to hear from you.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. E. Brown', is written over the typed name and title. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

James E. Brown
Executive Director

cc: MIB board