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## Remarks to the 64th Montana Legislative Assembly

Max S. Baucus

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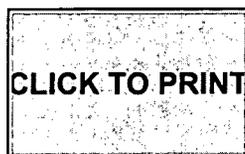
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# Remarks to the 64th Montana Legislative Assembly

Date: January 10, 2013

Location: House Chamber of the Capitol, Helena, MT

Podium: Yes

In attendance: Members of the Legislature, members of the media, general public

Objective of Statement: You will address the 64<sup>th</sup> session of the Montana Legislature to update members of the Legislature, and the people of Montana, on your work in the U.S. Senate. Main themes of your speech include working to boost Montana jobs, and the importance of working together to accomplish goals.

***This is a chance to lay out your vision for Montana and make your case for re-election.***

**OPENING STATEMENT/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

**Good afternoon.**

**Mr. Speaker. Mr. President.**

**Members of the House and Senate.**

**Distinguished guests:**

**-Governor Steve Bullock**

**-Lt. Governor John Walsh**

**-Attorney General Tim Fox**

**-State Auditor Monica Lindeen**

**-Superintendent Denise Juneau**

**-Secretary of State Linda McCullough**

**-Members of the Supreme Court**

**It's an honor to be here. Thank you for inviting me to speak.**

**Being here brings back some wonderful memories I have from serving in this chamber.**

**And, it gives me a chance to see who's sitting in my old desk.**

**\_\_\_\_\_, welcome to the Montana legislature. I hope that your time here is as meaningful as it was for me.**

**I learned something important here that is increasingly relevant to our time.**

**Nothing of consequence can be achieved without working together.**

**In all my years in public office, I've never seen such a time of toxic partisanship.**

**Nations rise and fall based on the degree to which people are working together toward our common goals.**

**It's a time that begs for the wisdom of people like Mike Mansfield.**

**Mike once told me: "Max, remember: the other guy's not always wrong. And you're not always right."**

**It's humbling advice.**

**Sometimes it's the small steps that count the most.**

**In the Montana legislature you can battle it out during the day here at the capitol, but shake hands and head over to Jorgenson's or the Windbag at night.**

**You'd never guess it from the headlines, but there ARE people in Congress who believe in working together.**

**Just the other day, I crossed the aisle – and walked across the capitol to welcome our new Congressman, Steve Daines to Washington.**

**At 2 AM on January 1<sup>st</sup>, I walked over to Mitch McConnell's office.**

**He was catching a couple Z's after a long night.**

**I got him up to say Happy New Year!**

**He looked at me, surprised, and said, "Thanks, Max!**

**You're the first person to wish me a happy New Year."**

**While we might not always agree, there are a lot of dedicated public servants in Montana and across this great Nation.**

**It reminds me of something baseball legend Casey**

**Stengel once said: "Getting' good players is easy.**

**Getting' 'em to play together is the hard part."**

**In this room, I look out and see a lot of great players.  
Montanans are watching and they want to see us win.**

**WORKDAYS**

**As often as possible, I spend a day working at a  
Montana business.**

**In the last year, I had some great days working  
alongside crews from a construction site in Missoula  
to the sugar beet factory in Billings.**

**Workdays this year included everything from sorting  
mail early in the morning at a post office to heading  
underground for hard rock mining.**

**In Missoula, I worked on an impressive housing  
project by the Wye. [*pronounced "Why"*]**

**It's part of the NeighborWorks program based in Great Falls.**

**Neighbors worked together on each other's homes in order to build sweat equity. And no family can move in to their new home until all of the homes are completed.**

**These families work side by side to build each home. And in turn, they build a community.**

**I spent a day raising the exterior walls alongside the home owner and some of the neighbors.**

**Odds are the neighbors won't always see eye to eye.**

**But, the value of each home is strengthened when the entire neighborhood is complete.**

**The program has helped close to 100 families in Montana achieve the American dream in the last 9 years.**

**In this new legislative session, you too, will be working with neighbors to build up your own districts.**

**Like the NeighborWorks program, the entire state will benefit if each lawmaker respects and pitches in to help his or her neighbor.**

**We have a new Governor, Steve Bullock, who is committed to working together to get things done.**

**We have a mix of those who have been here before and fresh faces.**

**You have a unique opportunity to do something big for Montana.**

**I know the challenges you have faced when it comes to partisanship.**

**You will likely face them again.**

**However, taking small steps across the aisle and making the effort to work together is what Montanans expect from us.**

**After all, we're just the hired hands.**

**WORKING TOGETHER TO DELIVER RESULTS**

**When we do our job – when we cut wasteful spending and invest in infrastructure and education - we keep Montana in good paying jobs.**

**Last year, I wrote a new Highway Bill and worked with Republicans and Democrats to get it passed.**

**Working together for the highway bill means:**

- **13,500 Montana jobs**
- **\$400 million in federal funding for Montana annually.**
- **For every dollar Montanans contribute to the Highway Trust fund, we'll get back \$2.23.**

**You don't see that kind of return on any investment anywhere.**

**As part of the highway bill, I was also able to secure support from both sides of the aisle on my Secure Rural Schools (SRS) and Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) amendment.**

**These important programs bring nearly \$50 million to Montana counties every year.**

**These funds help repair county roads, keep the boilers running at our rural schools and keep the lights on for our search and rescue crews.**

**We did it without adding a dime to the federal deficit.  
Working together delivers results.**

**ENERGY JOBS**

**We extended the Production Tax Credit that supports wind farm projects in Montana like the Rim Rock Wind farm in Glacier and Toole Counties and the Musselshell Wind Farm in Golden Valley and Wheatland Counties.**

**This tax credit has brought more than \$1.5 billion in investment to Montana and supported 1,500 jobs.**

**That's 1,500 more paychecks supporting Montana families, helping them put food on the table and in turn support our Main Street businesses.**

**When it comes to energy: Montana has it all.**

**And we've got to work together to make sure Montana can use every tool available to maximize our energy potential.**

**There are an estimated 18,000 energy jobs ready for the taking in the Bakken region.**

**I worked together with Montana's university system and community colleges to launch a new program designed to make sure Montanans have the training necessary to land those energy jobs.**

**Because the oil boom has strained local infrastructure, I've issued a "Call to Action in the Bakken" to the President.**

**The call is to make sure every appropriate federal resource makes its way to Montana.**

**I've asked every relevant federal agency to work together and take a look at what more they can be doing to support the energy jobs available in eastern Montana.**

**And, you can bet, I'm going to keep up the pressure.**

**We have a wealth of coal, and developing it responsibly means investing in clean coal technology.**

**I fought hard to make sure the Montana state universities can move forward with a cutting edge public-private clean coal demonstration project by supporting \$70 million in federal funding.**

**I also fought to make sure that policies like regional haze and coal ash regulations are sensible.**

**And, after well over three years of studies, it's time to cut through the red tape and put Montanans to work on the Keystone Pipeline.**

**FARM BILL**

**One-in-five Montana jobs rely on our number one industry: Agriculture.**

**In 2010, agriculture generated \$2.6 billion in income on over 29,000 farms and ranches.**

**Wheat and beef account for about three-fourths of the state's agricultural receipts.**

**Other important crops to the diversity of the state include peas and lentils, seed potatoes, sugar beets, honey and barley for beer.**

**Montana is the largest organic wheat producer in the country.**

**Working together with Republicans and Democrats, I led the charge to pass a bipartisan Farm bill out of the Senate this year.**

**A bill which worked for all of Montana agriculture.**

**It got stuck in the House, but I'm going to keep working at it because it's so critical to our economy.**

**Fighting for Montana Priorities**

**The so-called "fiscal cliff" was, perhaps, the most glaring example of people refusing to work together.**

**We should never have gotten to that point.**

**However, in the end – folks were able to come together to avert the unthinkable.**

**While the final result wasn't perfect, I managed to get others on board to protect Montana priorities.**

**We were able to keep taxes from going up on 400,000 working families.**

**We provided permanent estate tax relief for Montana farmers, ranchers, and small businesses.**

**We extended tax cuts that allow families to deduct the cost of college tuition. This affects nearly 30,000 Montana families.**

**We extended tax credits to businesses that hire new workers.**

**We extended tax cuts that help small businesses access the capital they need to grow and hire more workers.**

**And, just like Montana families do every month around the kitchen table: we made some tough decisions on how to make ends meet.**

**We passed the Budget Control Act which included more than \$2 trillion in cuts.**

**It included \$40 billion in cutting out waste, fraud and abuse in programs like unemployment insurance.**

**We also saved \$11 billion in agricultural reforms.**

**We've got more work to make sure we're taking care of our debt now instead of kicking the can down the road to our kids and grandkids.**

**We must do it, and we will do it by rolling up our sleeves and working together.**

**Veterans**

**There's another lesson I learned working in the Montana legislature that's never left me.**

**In fact, it's rule number one in my office.**

**Remember who we serve.**

**Montanans are counting on all of us to get the job done.**

**To work together to make sure we leave this place in better shape than we found it.**

**It's a moral obligation, it's a calling and it's our duty.**

**In that vein, I ask that we take a moment to also remember who is serving us.**

**Right now we have nearly 300 Montana troops risking their lives in Afghanistan.**

**With more veterans per capita than nearly anywhere else in the country: Montanans proudly answer when duty calls.**

**Just think: one in ten Montanans is a vet.**

**Let's all stand up and thank our veterans.**

**And, let's recognize our Lieutenant Governor, General John Walsh and all of the veterans currently serving in the Montana legislature: *(Lewis is adding names)***

***[Applause]***

**We have 100,000 veterans in Montana.**

**When a service member puts on his or her uniform,  
the entire family carries the burden.**

**The Skillman family (*Working on confirming they will  
be sitting in the front row*) of Helena is a proud  
example of this commitment.**

**There's a bright young gal here named Suzie Skillman.**

**She's 5 years old.**

**Imagine: her dad, her grandpa and her grandma  
deployed together to serve in Afghanistan.**

**Suzie's mom, Amber, deserves a big round of  
applause for holding down the home front!**

***[applause]***

**Suzie's dad, Jaymes Skillman, along with her grandparents Dan and Lola are currently providing life support for troops in Afghanistan with the 652<sup>nd</sup> Regional Support Group.**

**That's the kind of service that tugs at us to do even more to make sure the Skillmans and all of our troops can return to a country and a state that is worthy of their sacrifice.**

**People have asked me: what's your New Year's resolution, Max?**

**Run another marathon? Hike to the top of Granite Peak, again?**

**I'm here to announce: my New Year's Resolution is to bring our troops home from Afghanistan and to make sure they have good-paying jobs when they come home.**

**It's been ten years since we've sent our troops to Afghanistan.**

**310 Americans were killed in Afghanistan in 2012- that's more than were killed in the first five years of this long war combined.**

**In total, over 2,000 Americans have died serving in Afghanistan, including 10 Montanans.**

**10 brave Montanans whose loved ones will never see them again.**

**Over 18,000 have been wounded in Afghanistan, including 50 Montanans.**

**50 Montanans living daily with the physical wounds of war.**

**Far more carry the emotion scars of war.**

**I had the honor of meeting some of Montana's wounded warriors this fall.**

**These young people display so much courage in their sacrifices, dedication to service, and long fight to recovery.**

**These patriots are Montana's future leaders. Instead of nation-building in Afghanistan, we need to invest in Americans like them.**

**In 2011, Montana's unemployment rate among veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars was over 20 percent.**

**The fourth highest in the nation.**

**This is an absolute disgrace.**

**Today, we received some news from the Government Accounting Office.**

**The agency released a report emphasizing the need for better coordination and greater transparency in veteran job training services.**

**The report shows what we already know: we can do more to make sure our troops come home to good-paying jobs.**

**With that in mind, the first bill I plan to introduce this Congress is my VETS Jobs bill.**

**This bill will focus on job-training for our veterans.**

**It will make it easier for businesses to hire veterans.**

**It will work to ensure that disabled veterans that open small businesses get a fair shake.**

**In short, it will help our vets get the good-paying jobs they deserve.**

### **Montana Economic Development Summits**

**Earlier this month, we got some great news: A Butte family company called SeaCast is partnering with GE Aviation to create a new joint venture and new Montana jobs.**

**The seeds for this important relationship were planted at our 5<sup>th</sup> Montana Economic Development Summit in Butte in 2010.**

**I've held these summits every three years, bringing business leaders from across the country together with Montana entrepreneurs to create jobs.**

**They work.**

**Prior to the summit, Seacast had 21 employees. They currently have more than 70.**

**This new venture is expected to add hundreds of jobs. These are high-tech good-paying jobs Montana needs.**

**I had three rules at the first Economic Development Summit I organized, in 2001.**

**These are rules I continue to live by in order to keep our momentum going and create good paying jobs:**

- **First, No Politics.**

**There's just no room for politics when it comes to Montana's economy. It's about working together and doing what's right for our economy.**

- **Second, All Solutions Should be Private-Sector Driven.**

**Private-public partnerships are key to providing the right environment to help our economy grow.**

- **Third, Nothing's Off the Table.**

**An open mind and outside-the-box thinking are essential in this new economy.**

**I'm proud to announce we'll be holding another Montana Economic Development Summit this fall.**

**I look forward to hearing your ideas on how we can make it the best summit yet that will yield even more great results like what we're seeing with SeaCast in Butte.**

**Closing:**

**As we look forward to the fresh possibilities of a new legislative session and a new Governor, I remind you that in your hands, more than in mine, rests the future of our state.**

**We stand upon the tall shoulders of great statesmen and women who have come before us.**

**As Mike Mansfield said:**

**“We’ll have to set examples for those who will follow us and recognize that we don’t know it all. So we should listen to the other person, and that other person sometimes is right and sometimes we are wrong. It will be a matter of accommodation and compromise, knowledge and understanding.”**

**I encourage you to consider his advice today,  
tomorrow and in the days to come.**

**Listen to each other. Learn from each other.**

**Serve those who have entrusted you.**

**And take steps of every magnitude to work together.**

**It's worth it.**

**And, frankly, it's more fun that way!**

**It's been an honor to be here, thank you for having  
me.**