

November 13, 2008

To: Darlene Staffeldt, State Librarian
Montana State Library Commission (MSLC)

Fr: Christie Briggs, Supervisor
Montana Talking Book Library (MTBL)

RE: Proposed request from the Montana State Library Trust Fund of \$5,000.00 annual subscription fee for Montana Radio Reading Service for 2009.

Montana Radio Reading Service is a Montana non-profit corporation located in Missoula and provides fifteen Montana newspapers to over 1,000 Montanans who are unable to read or hold conventional material because of a visual or physical disability. This includes eight daily newspapers and seven weekly newspapers. Besides newspapers, listeners can hear excerpts from over 100 current magazines, The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times, provided through the nation-wide In-Touch Network. This service began in 1979 and has continued to grow.

Individuals receive free services including a radio receiver utilizing a closed circuit radio channel. Individuals are provided with a schedule of when each newspaper airs. This schedule rotates between 9am and 9:30pm, Monday-Friday. The broadcast area covers major Montana cities and towns and many rural areas where KUFM, KGPR and KEMC are received.

Montana Radio Reading Service, in partnership with the Montana Association for the Blind, is actively planning to approach the 2009 Legislature and request this be funded by legislative appropriations. Montana Talking Book Library would share administrative responsibility of subscribing eligible individuals to Montana Radio Reading Services.

Approximately 90% of Montana Radio Reading Service listeners are over 60 years of age, meeting the needs of a specific age group.