

Hello from the Montana Roofing Association (MRA):

Past president and patriarch of the MRA, Mr. Dexter Thiel of Thiel Brothers Roofing in Sidney, Montana, did an excellent job, as the head of the MRA Political Activities Committee, at planning and hosting the MRA Roofing Day in Helena, Montana.

The MRA was represented at the event by nine attendees who volunteered two days to learn and engage in the processes and issues that affect our Montana roofing industry.

The event kicked off in Helena on Tuesday, January 31, 2023 at the Montana State Fund Workers Compensation boardroom with an introduction to the legislative process and navigating the capitol, hosted by Mr. Ethan Heverly, Director of Government and Community Relations and Mr. Kevin Braun, General Counsel both representing Montana State Fund. Holly O'Dell, President of Montana State Fund, also graciously stopped by and introduced herself. We discussed the processes of government and some of the 2023 bills that could affect the roofing industry regarding workers compensation and independent contractor workers compensation exemptions.

We then had a meeting with Mr. Paul Blumenthal, Architect and Mr. Cody Mitchell, Construction Manager of Montana State Department of Administration Architecture and Engineering Division. We discussed how the A&E Division is handling project schedules as contractors deal with material and labor issues.

In the afternoon we had an great meeting with the honorable Governor of the State of Montana Mr. Greg Gianforte and Mr. Dylan Klapmeier, Education & Workforce Policy Advisor. We discussed the work that the Governor's team has been doing and the progress that is being made by the current administration regarding legislative issues, bills, budget surplus, etc. The Governor discussed the labor crisis and the State Internship Programs and Career and Technical Education that is being implemented across the state to help solve the issues.

In the evening we had dinner with Senator Greg Hertz (R) - SD6 as well as Representative and House Majority Whip Brandon Ler (R) HD35. Senator Hertz generously discussed with us the status of the lawsuit against the state that affects the State Fund Workers Compensation as well as the details of some current bills that could affect the roofing industry.

The next morning, Wednesday, February 1, 2023, we were up early and at the capitol building to sit in on a very interesting but non-roofing related hearing for HB304 that would require marijuana producers to filter air and odors from marijuana growing and processing facilities. Just as it was getting heated up and interesting, we had to leave that hearing and return to the State Fund boardroom to conduct a 2 hour Montana Roofing Association meeting. We discussed a newly proposed format for the annual MRA golf tournament and convention/trade show as well as a new format with additional options for MRA membership dues structure.

Although no major decisions were made as the group lacked a quorum from the Board of Directors, the discussion brought forth many new and innovative ideas regarding these topics.

After lunch in the boardroom we rushed over to the offices of the Department of Labor for a very informative meeting hosted by Mr. Eric Strauss, Division Administrator of the DOL. Also in attendance was Mr. Jeff Garden, Inspections Section and Mr. Mark Lillrose, Special Programs Coordinator for the Montana State Apprenticeship Program. and Mr. Eric Copeland Bureau Chief of the Building and Commercial Measurements Building Codes Bureau. We discussed some details surrounding SB22 regarding independent contractors as well as LC3153. Mr. Lillrose also discussed with us some details of the Montana Apprenticeship Program, utilization requirements and available Apprenticeship Tax Credits (reductions). Mr. Copeland joined the meeting and visited with us about building codes. He answered our questions about roofing underlayment and roof sheathing codes. We also discussed what the MRA could do to get involved in the "Code Making Process".

All in all it was a tremendous event with great value and camaraderie for all of us who took the time to attend, learn, discuss, and engage for the greater good of furthering the roofing industry that we are all so passionate about.

See some photos from the event by clicking on the following link:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/GpADf8htFZzcz5Ny7>

Thank you!

Respectfully,

Jake J. Magalsky
MRA President

