

\*\*\*\* Joint Resolution No. \*\*\*\*

Introduced By \*\*\*\*\*

By Request of the \*\*\*\*\*

A Joint Resolution of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the State of Montana requesting an interim study to analyze the impacts of the Montana Renewable Power Production and Rural Economic Development Act; and requiring that the final results of the study be reported to the 64th legislature.

WHEREAS, the Montana Renewable Power Production and Rural Economic Development Act has required certain utilities to procure a percentage of their resources from renewable resources since 2008; and

WHEREAS, beginning in 2015, and in each succeeding year, a public utility and competitive electricity supplier are required to procure a minimum of 15% of its retail sales of electrical energy in Montana from renewable resources; and

WHEREAS, there are ongoing discussions about increasing the renewable portfolio standard or abolishing the requirement; and

WHEREAS, there has been limited analysis of the impact the Renewable Power Production and Rural Economic Development Act has had in Montana.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an

appropriate interim committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to:

(1) review the economic impacts of the renewable portfolio standard by analyzing:

(a) the renewable portfolio standard's contribution to new electrical generation in Montana;

(b) the short-term and long-term jobs created by the standard;

(c) industries working in Montana due in part to the standard;

(d) the use of renewable energy credits in Montana by the renewable energy industry; and

(e) how the standard has been used to leverage Montana's competitive advantages in developing new electric transmission;

(2) review the environmental benefits of the renewable portfolio standard by analyzing:

(a) the standard's contribution to diversified generation in Montana and to reduced dependence on fossil fuels;

(b) the types of renewable generation used in meeting the standard; and

(c) potential contributions to air quality improvements attributable to the standard; and

(3) review the impacts the renewable portfolio standard has had on Montana consumers by analyzing:

(a) whether the standard has mitigated or contributed to higher energy costs for consumers;

(b) how the standard has been used to hedge against

volatility in fossil fuel prices; and

(c) if the standard complements or hinders other efforts to help consumers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that upon completion of the study, the committee make recommendations, if appropriate, to:

(1) revise Montana's Renewable Power Production and Rural Economic Development Act; and

(2) clarify existing law to ensure that the compliance costs do not outweigh the economic and environmental benefits.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the study is assigned to staff, any findings or conclusions be presented to and reviewed by an appropriate committee designated by the Legislative Council.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2014.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions, comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 64th Legislature.

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