

## 1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 29

2 INTRODUCED BY E. CARNEY

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4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF  
5 MONTANA REQUESTING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ESTABLISH A TASK  
6 FORCE TO DEVELOP AN ASSAY METHOD FOR THE MEASUREMENT OF ASBESTOS TO ASSIST IN THE  
7 ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AMBIENT AIR STANDARD BASED ON HUMAN HEALTH RISKS FROM CHRONIC  
8 EXPOSURE TO ASBESTOS.

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10 WHEREAS, the residents of Libby, Montana, have been afflicted with health concerns and human  
11 mortality resulting from occupational and secondary exposure to tremolite asbestos fibers discharged into  
12 the environment by the mining of vermiculite at the nearby W.R. Grace mine facilities; and

13 WHEREAS, considerable research is currently underway in Libby by several state and federal  
14 agencies to analyze the threat to human health and the environment from asbestos; and

15 WHEREAS, there is currently no federal or state ambient air standard established for identifying  
16 a safe level for the chronic exposure of humans to airborne asbestos fibers; and

17 WHEREAS, the federal Environmental Protection Agency is in the process of developing a  
18 particulate sampling method and protocol for measuring fine airborne particles that may also be useful in  
19 developing an assay method for airborne asbestos fibers and ultimately useful in establishing an ambient  
20 air quality standard or guidance threshold based on human health risk and exposure; and

21 WHEREAS, the Montana University System can provide the intellectual and technical capability to  
22 assist in the development of an asbestos assay method that would significantly contribute to the further  
23 scientific understanding of the risks of asbestos exposure and assist in the development of an ambient air  
24 standard for asbestos.

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

28 (1) That the Department of Environmental Quality be urged to establish and oversee a task force  
29 of health and environmental officials and scientists from the State of Montana, federal health and  
30 environmental agencies, and the Montana University System and of other interested persons, with the goal

1 of developing a credible scientific method to measure airborne asbestos that would assist in the  
2 development of an ambient air standard for asbestos based on the human health risks from chronic  
3 exposure.

4 (2) That the Department, with the active participation of the task force, be urged to aggressively  
5 pursue and solicit funding to support this effort, to act as a clearinghouse for current and future research  
6 on the subject, and to distribute any grants and funds received by the Department.

7 (3) That the University System be urged to participate in and provide the scientific research that  
8 would achieve the goals of this resolution.

9 (4) That the members of Montana's Congressional Delegation be urged to assist the Department  
10 in providing federal resources, funds, and guidance to the task force, recognizing that the knowledge  
11 gained from the Libby experience can be of significant value to the entire nation.

12 (5) That, for the next 2 years, the Department provide the Environmental Quality Council with an  
13 annual progress report on efforts made toward achieving the goal of developing an asbestos assay method  
14 that could assist in the development of ambient air standards for asbestos.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent by the Secretary of State to the  
16 Montana Congressional Delegation, the Commissioner of Higher Education, the Presidents of Montana  
17 State University-Bozeman and the University of Montana-Missoula, the Mayor of Libby, the Director of the  
18 Montana Office of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Director of the Department of  
19 Environmental Quality.

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