

1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 14

2 INTRODUCED BY A. CURTISS

3

4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
5 MONTANA URGING THE MONTANA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO PURSUE FUNDING OPTIONS
6 FROM FEDERAL SOURCES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, CONSTRUCTION, AND MAINTENANCE IN LIBBY,
7 MONTANA, OF A CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF ASBESTOS AND THE TREATMENT OF ILLNESSES
8 RELATED TO TREMOLITE-SERIES ASBESTOS.

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10 WHEREAS, illness from tremolite-series asbestos is a problem that extends beyond Montana to national
11 and international levels but that afflicts Libby, Montana, in particular, a town that has the largest identified
12 population of people suffering from diseases associated with exposure to tremolite-series asbestos; and

13 WHEREAS, studies reviewed by the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry identified
14 asbestiform fibers from Libby, Montana, in concentrations higher than in samples from South Carolina and
15 comparisons of certain samples from Virginia and South Africa also indicated reasons for concern about the
16 asbestos-related samples from Montana; and

17 WHEREAS, further study of tremolite-series asbestos is important for an understanding of the health
18 implications regarding proximity to vermiculite mines and waste products, including tremolite-series asbestos,
19 from mining and milling vermiculite; and

20 WHEREAS, scientists from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Agency for Toxic
21 Substances and Disease Registry have begun studying the residents of Libby in relation to their exposure to
22 vermiculite that was mined and milled in the area between 1923 and 1990; and

23 WHEREAS, when the Governor in 2002 named Libby, Montana, as the state's top priority for hazardous
24 waste cleanup, thus making it eligible for an expedited listing on a Superfund national priorities list, this was the
25 second time in 20 years that the community had received Superfund status, with the first time in 1983 involving
26 a 20-plus-year study and abatement process regarding ground water contamination; and

27 WHEREAS, every dark cloud is said to have a silver lining and for the community of Libby the
28 opportunity exists to participate in indepth studies related to the effects on human health of mining and milling
29 of vermiculite and of exposure to byproducts, such as tremolite-series asbestos, as well as in studies on the
30 possible treatments of diseases related to exposure to tremolite-series asbestos; and

1 WHEREAS, research is best performed in a community where people suffering from different stages
2 of diseases related to exposure to tremolite-series asbestos may be studied in the surroundings associated with
3 the exposure; and

4 WHEREAS, the existing medical community of Libby, Montana, includes a state-of-the-art hospital and
5 medical personnel with the experience and expertise to address the diagnoses and treatment of
6 asbestos-related diseases; and

7 WHEREAS, telecommunications systems allow researchers in Libby, Montana, to confer with specialists
8 anywhere in the world; and

9 WHEREAS, the community of Libby is in contact with specialists nationwide, as well as specialists at
10 the University of Montana in Missoula, at Montana State University in Bozeman, and at state agencies in Helena;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, the community of Libby, Montana, has a sociopolitical structure with the experience and
13 expertise for addressing asbestos-related issues and a skilled and available work force for constructing a center
14 in Libby for the study of asbestos issues and for conducting research into diseases associated with exposure
15 to tremolite-series asbestos; and

16 WHEREAS, Libby, Montana, is the most logical location in the world for the construction of a center to
17 research asbestos issues and the medical treatment of diseases related to tremolite-series asbestos; and

18 WHEREAS, Libby, Montana, is in the process of acquiring land to accommodate a facility for the study
19 of asbestos issues and treatment of diseases associated with tremolite-series asbestos; and

20 WHEREAS, research, study, and medical care are welcomed and fully supported by the greater Libby
21 community.

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

25 That the Legislature urge the Montana Congressional Delegation to pursue funding options from federal
26 sources to develop, build, and maintain in Libby, Montana, a center for the study of asbestos issues and the
27 treatment of illnesses related to tremolite-series asbestos.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send copies of this resolution to the President
29 of the United States, to members of the Montana Congressional Delegation, and to all other members of the U.S.
30 Congress.

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