

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 36

INTRODUCED BY TOOLE, ESSMANN

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A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY TO INVESTIGATE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF, AND OBSTACLES TO, EXPANDING DISTRIBUTED ENERGY GENERATION IN MONTANA.

WHEREAS, Montana citizens and lawmakers have become very interested in renewable and other small-scale distributed generation systems since the electrical energy crisis in the summer of 2001; and

WHEREAS, distributed energy generation complements the central-station model of electricity generation and offers potential solutions to many of today's pressing energy and electric power problems, including energy price spikes, energy security concerns, power quality issues, rising energy costs, tighter emissions standards, transmission bottlenecks, and the desire for greater control over energy costs; and

WHEREAS, distributed generation might provide a more affordable alternative for adding future load to remote Montana locations than adding parallel lines over long distances; and

WHEREAS, distributed energy technologies may be used to meet baseload power, peaking power, backup power, remote power, power quality, and cooling and heating needs; and

WHEREAS, several of the emerging technologies currently being promoted and developed in Montana, such as rooftop solar arrays, small wind turbines, and fuel cells, are ideal for distributed generation; and

WHEREAS, permitting and construction of large, central power plants takes years, while small generating units can be brought online quickly; and

WHEREAS, homeowners and entrepreneurs generating more electricity than they need can net meter and sell their surplus to the grid; and

WHEREAS, an in-depth study is needed to explore any technical, market, and regulatory challenges to developing distributed generation that might exist and to inform the Legislature how these barriers might be overcome.

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



1 section 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to explore any technical, market, and regulatory
2 challenges to developing distributed generation that might exist and to inform the Legislature how these barriers
3 might be overcome.

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

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review
7 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2006.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,
9 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 60th Legislature.

10 - END -