1   HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 47

2   INTRODUCED BY FRENCH, COHENOUR, STOKER

3   BY REQUEST OF THE HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES STANDING COMMITTEE

4

5   A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF

6   MONTANA REQUESTING THAT AN INTERIM COMMITTEE STUDY THE FUNDING, EXPENDITURES, AND

7   EFFECTIVENESS OF MONTANA'S STATEWIDE GENETICS PROGRAM.

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9   WHEREAS, the statewide genetics program has served Montanans since its creation in the 1960s at

10   what was then known as the Boulder River School and Hospital; and

11   WHEREAS, the Montana Legislature established the statewide genetics program in the Department of

12   Public Health and Human Services in 1985; and

13   WHEREAS, the Department of Public Health and Human Services issues a request for proposals to

14   contract for the statewide genetics program; and

15   WHEREAS, the statewide genetics program provides unique clinical and laboratory services to diagnose

16   and treat genetic disorders, as well as to prevent genetic disorders by determining a person's risk factors and

17   providing information to help manage high-risk pregnancies; and

18   WHEREAS, the statewide genetics program holds clinics in towns throughout the state each year to allow

19   Montanans to obtain genetics services without traveling to Helena; and

20   WHEREAS, if the statewide genetics program no longer existed, Montanans could obtain similar genetic

21   services only by going out of state; and

22   WHEREAS, the statewide genetics program is highly respected and well-recognized within the field of

23   genetics; and

24   WHEREAS, the Montana Legislature in 1985 established a fee on each Montana resident insured under

25   any individual or group disability or health insurance policy, including those insured through the state employee

26   insurance plan, to fund the statewide genetics program; and

27   WHEREAS, the Montana Legislature has amended the genetics program fee four times since its

28   imposition and is again considering a change in the level of the fee; and

29   WHEREAS, creating a stable and equitable source of funding will benefit not only the statewide genetics

30   program, but also Montanans who use the program and the Montana economy.

1   NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE

2   STATE OF MONTANA:

3   That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee, pursuant to

4   section 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to:

5   (1) study the history of the funding of the statewide genetics program established in section 50-19-211,

6   MCA;

7   (2) review the current public and private sources of the program's funding;

8   (3) review program expenditures;

9   (4) evaluate the effectiveness of the program by examining factors that include but are not limited to the

10   number of people served by the program, the number of communities visited by the program, and the types of

11   services provided; and

12   (5) make recommendations for maintaining an effective statewide genetics program, including but not

13   limited to recommendations for providing a stable and equitable source of funding for the program.

14   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the study is assigned to staff, any findings or conclusions be

15   presented to and reviewed by an appropriate committee designated by the Legislative Council.

16   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review

17   requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2008.

18   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,

19   comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 61st Legislature.

20   - END -