

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 24

2 INTRODUCED BY W. CURDY, S. LAVIN

3
4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
5 MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF MONTANA'S TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE,
6 INCLUDING HIGHWAYS, ROADS, STREETS, BRIDGES, PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, AND MONTANA
7 HIGHWAY PATROL FUNDING AND REQUESTING AN INTERIM COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE, IDENTIFY,
8 ASSESS, AND RECOMMEND PRACTICAL, ACHIEVABLE, AND SUSTAINABLE MEANS OF PROVIDING
9 LONG-TERM, STABLE FUNDING TO SUFFICIENTLY ADDRESS MONTANA'S STATE, COUNTY, AND
10 MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS
11 OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 65TH LEGISLATURE.

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13 WHEREAS, Montana's transportation infrastructure, including highways, roads, streets, bridges, public
14 transportation, and safety provided through the Montana highway patrol is critical to the mobility and safety of
15 Montana's citizens and to the state's economic viability; and

16 WHEREAS, Montana has about 74,000 miles of public roads, of which nearly 13,000 miles are state
17 highways over which nearly 76% of Montana's annual vehicle miles are traveled. The state highways alone
18 include approximately 4,500 bridges that are integral to the efficient functioning of the state's transportation
19 system; and

20 WHEREAS, the Montana Department of Transportation estimates that nearly \$16 billion of investment
21 is needed over the next 10 years to maintain and upgrade state highways and bridges; and

22 WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation further estimates that total revenue available for
23 maintaining and upgrading state highways and bridges over the next 10 years will be less than \$6 billion,
24 representing a funding shortfall of nearly 63%; and

25 WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation also estimates that the funding gap between transportation
26 infrastructure needs and available resources for city streets and county roads and the bridges integral to each
27 is as great or greater than the needs-to-funding gap estimated for state highways and bridges; and

28 WHEREAS, Montana legislatures have chosen to substantially rely on motor fuel tax revenue and motor
29 vehicle fees to fund the Montana highway patrol and its efforts to recruit and retain the personnel necessary to
30 maintain the organization as the elite law enforcement agency that it has become; and

1 WHEREAS, motor fuel tax revenue and motor vehicle fees are also primary funding sources for highway
2 and bridge construction and repair, including state matching funds for more than \$400 million annually in federal
3 transportation funding aid, and Montana's motor fuel tax rates have been at the same levels since 1993.
4 Comparatively, over the same 22-year period, highway, road, street, and bridge construction costs have risen
5 25% more than the consumer price index and total annual vehicle miles traveled on Montana highways has
6 increased 34% since 1993 ~~to~~ BY 2.3 billion miles per year AND NOW APPROACHES 12 BILLION MILES ANNUALLY; and

7 WHEREAS, Montana's reliance on the motor fuel tax rates established 22 years ago, the relatively flat
8 amount of revenue raised from state motor fuel taxes, and the increasingly unstable federal highway
9 transportation program, coupled with rising construction costs and the expanded use and increased needs of the
10 state's aging transportation infrastructure, have resulted in a state highway program that can no longer maintain,
11 upgrade, or replace Montana's transportation infrastructure at a level that is adequate to support the safe and
12 efficient operation of the system and a Montana highway patrol that is faced with increasingly disquieting
13 budgetary issues; and

14 WHEREAS, there is increasing recognition of the important role that public transportation, including rural,
15 urban, and intercity bus service, plays in the state's critical transportation infrastructure, which must be considered
16 when evaluating the state's overall transportation infrastructure and system needs.

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

20 That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee, pursuant to
21 section 5-5-217, MCA, to investigate ways to assess the current and future condition, needs, and sufficiency of
22 the state's, counties', and municipalities' transportation infrastructure and systems, including alternative modes
23 of transportation and the Montana highway patrol.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in conducting the investigation the interim committee should involve
25 representatives of:

- 26 (1) the Montana Department of Transportation, Montana highway patrol, counties, and municipalities;
27 (2) transportation infrastructure engineering, design, and construction professionals;
28 (3) highway, road, street, and public transportation users; and
29 (4) other potentially interested or affected parties.

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study also investigate, identify, assess, and recommend practical,

1 achievable, and sustainable means of providing long-term, stable funding to sufficiently address in broad context
2 Montana's state, county, and municipal transportation infrastructure needs.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review
4 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2016.

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,
6 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 65th Legislature.

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