_____ JOINT RESOLUTION NO. _____

INTRODUCED BY _____

(Primary Sponsor)

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA URGING FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCIES IN WYOMING TO STOP FEEDING ELK ON WINTER RANGE.

WHEREAS, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the State of Wyoming provide hay and alfalfa pellets to more than 20,000 elk at 23 feeding sites in Wyoming south of Yellowstone National Park, including the National Elk Refuge near Jackson Hole; and

WHEREAS, this practice results in artificially high populations of elk in these areas and a loss of the animals' natural instincts to survive without human assistance; and

WHEREAS, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service acknowledges that elk congregating in these unnaturally dense clusters can result in environmental damage and contamination; and

WHEREAS, both the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department acknowledge that the prolonged congregation of animals at these feeding sites increases the probability of disease transmission, including scabies, foot rot, brucellosis, and chronic wasting disease that can spread through the herds and be transmitted to other animals in the region, including in Yellowstone National Park and Montana; and

WHEREAS, brucellosis can be transmitted to domestic livestock resulting in weight loss, loss of young, infertility, and lameness with serious economic consequences for producers; and

WHEREAS, chronic wasting disease is a fatal neurologic disease against which elk, deer, and moose have no immunity.

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

That the Montana Legislature urges the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the State of Wyoming to stop feeding elk.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send a copy of this resolution to the Secretary of the Interior, the director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the manager of the National Elk Refuge, the Governor of Wyoming, and the director of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

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