

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 6
INTRODUCED BY D. BROWN

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS AND PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH TO INCREASE FUNDING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION TO MEET THE FEDERAL COMMITMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT.

WHEREAS, special education programs serving students with disabilities provide essential services to children and their families; and

WHEREAS, state and local educational agencies are mandated by federal law to provide a free appropriate public education for children with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, costs associated with serving children with disabilities continue to rise, and meeting those substantial costs requires a strong partnership between local, state, and federal governments; and

WHEREAS, underfunding of special education programs affects the quality of services provided to children with disabilities and results in local school districts redirecting resources that could otherwise be used for all children; and

WHEREAS, the federal commitment to states and localities under the federal Individuals With Disabilities Education Act to contribute 40% of the excess costs of providing a free appropriate public education has never been fulfilled; and

WHEREAS, despite recent large increases in federal special education funding, the federal share, currently at approximately 17%, is still less than one-half of the original commitment made by Congress to the states and localities.

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

That the Legislature of the State of Montana urge the United States Congress and President George W. Bush to increase funding for special education so that the federal promise of providing states with 40% of the national average per-pupil expenditure required to serve children and youth with disabilities can be achieved.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send copies of this resolution to President George W. Bush, the members of the Montana Congressional Delegation, the Board of Public Education, and

the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

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