

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 11
INTRODUCED BY T. SCHMIDT

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA TO REQUEST A STUDY OF THE PROBLEMS OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE AND OF PREVENTION, EARLY INTERVENTION, AND TREATMENT.

WHEREAS, there are statewide multifaceted problems of alcohol and drug abuse and a lack of sufficient prevention, intervention, and treatment solutions to the problems; and

WHEREAS, methamphetamine abuse exemplifies the many issues involved, including extreme addiction, the dangers to people created by the production of drugs, such as ingredients and residues, and the broad range of public health issues, ranging from child endangerment and abandonment to shared needles, self-mutilation, and dental loss; and

WHEREAS, addictions involving alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and gambling often overlap for the same person and may interact with mental illness or other forms of dependency; and

WHEREAS, prevention and treatment programs need to take into consideration the holistic picture of the effects of codependency and co-occurring disorders, behaviors, and addictions on a person's mental health; and

WHEREAS, prevention and treatment issues must include affordability and availability of all effective treatment protocols, including in-state inpatient treatment; and

WHEREAS, once prevention and early intervention options are exhausted, options for treatment at all stages of the criminal justice system, including diversionary, preincarceration, sentencing, and probation and parole options, must be explored; and

WHEREAS, an effective review of many of these problems has been undertaken by Governor Martz's and Attorney General McGrath's Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Control Policy Task Force resulting in numerous proposals to the 58th Legislature, including a proposal for a drug czar or advisory committee; and

WHEREAS, effective solutions will have a price tag, but the consequences of not implementing prevention and early intervention efforts in the areas of crime, health and welfare of the workforce, and abuse, neglect, and dependence problems for children will be a higher cost to society in the future.

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

(1) review the progress made by the Governor's and Attorney General's Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Control Policy Task Force and the proposals that are enacted by the 58th Legislature; and

(2) continue to identify the issues and to develop proposals for a coordinated, cooperative effort by federal, state, and local levels of government and the private sector to implement prevention and early intervention efforts, to develop and use alternatives to incarceration, and to provide appropriate treatment opportunities at the most effective time and in the most cost-effective and efficient manner.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee is requested to work with representatives of local government, law enforcement, prosecution and defense counsel, the judiciary, corrections, probation and parole, the medical and treatment communities, those involved in public education and outreach, and with other interested persons in its research and development of recommendations.

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2004.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions, comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 59th Legislature.

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