

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 30
INTRODUCED BY TAYLOR

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING THAT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DESIGNATE AN APPROPRIATE INTERIM COMMITTEE OR DIRECT SUFFICIENT STAFF RESOURCES TO EXAMINE ~~MARKET ACCEPTANCE AND THE TIMING OF THE COMMERCIAL INTRODUCTION OF GENETICALLY ENGINEERED WHEAT AND BARLEY INTO MONTANA, THE DEVELOPMENT OF CROPS AND CROP CHARACTERISTICS THAT APPEAL TO THE NEEDS OF THE CUSTOMER AND THAT ARE ECONOMICALLY BENEFICIAL TO THE PRODUCER, THE DEVELOPMENT OF SAFEGUARDS TO REDUCE OUTCROSSING AND POTENTIAL MIXING OF GENETICALLY ENGINEERED CROPS WITH NONGENETICALLY ENGINEERED CROPS, AND LIABILITY ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PRODUCTION OF GENETICALLY ENGINEERED CROPS; URGING MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY TO REPORT RESEARCH RESULTS TO THE LEGISLATURE RELATED TO THE SAFETY OF GENETICALLY ENGINEERED GRAINS AND RELATED ISSUES; URGING THE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO EXPLORE AND PROMOTE APPROPRIATE BIOTECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITIES FOR MONTANA AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS; REQUIRING THAT FINDINGS BE PRESENTED TO AND REVIEWED BY A COMMITTEE; PROVIDING THAT THE STUDY BE COMPLETED BY SEPTEMBER 15, 2004; AND PROVIDING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 59TH LEGISLATURE.~~

WHEREAS, Montana's wheat and barley industry is a central and vital component of our state's economy;
and

WHEREAS, Montana's export markets have recognized Montana wheat and barley to be among the finest in the world; and

WHEREAS, Montana has come to rely on these export customers to market a majority of Montana's grain to Pacific Rim countries; and

WHEREAS, ~~a majority~~ SOME of these customers have not yet accepted genetically engineered grains;
and

WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes the importance of maintaining these foreign markets; AND

WHEREAS, BIOTECHNOLOGY HOLDS GREAT PROMISE FOR THE FUTURE IN FIGHTING GRAIN DISEASES AND IN PROVIDING NEW NICHE MARKETS SIMILAR TO THE PRESENT MARKET FOR ORGANIC PRODUCTS; AND

WHEREAS, QUESTIONS CONTINUE TO BE RAISED ABOUT THE SAFETY OF GENETICALLY ENGINEERED CROPS, NECESSITATING SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH TO PROVIDE ANSWERS TO THOSE QUESTIONS; AND

WHEREAS, PROGRAMS AT MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY MAY PROVIDE THE RESEARCH NOT ONLY TO ADDRESS SAFETY, BUT ALSO TO PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING NEW GENETICALLY ENGINEERED GRAIN VARIETIES, THE ADVISABILITY AND TIMING OF THEIR RELEASE, AND THE PROPER HANDLING, PRODUCTION, TRANSPORTATION, MARKETING, TESTING, AND DISPOSITION OF NEW VARIETIES; AND

WHEREAS, THE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS AN APPROPRIATE STATE AGENCY TO EXPLORE AND PROMOTE BIOTECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITIES FOR MONTANA PRODUCERS; AND

WHEREAS, THE LEGISLATURE DESIRES TO DOCUMENT CREDIBLE FINDINGS REGARDING GENETICALLY ENGINEERED GRAINS.

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 examine ~~the economic and social impacts of the commercial introduction of genetically engineered wheat and barley into Montana, including issues related to:~~

- ~~—— (1) market acceptance and the timing of the commercial introduction of genetically engineered wheat and barley;~~
- ~~—— (2) the development of wheat and barley and wheat and barley characteristics that appeal to the needs of the customer and that are economically beneficial to the producer;~~
- ~~—— (3) the development of safeguards to reduce outcrossing and potential mixing of genetically engineered wheat and barley with nongenetically engineered wheat and barley; and~~
- ~~—— (4) liability issues associated with the production and handling of genetically engineered wheat and barley.~~

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the entity conducting the study:

- ~~—— (1) invite participation by and involvement of interested and knowledgeable persons, including farmers, ranchers, property owners, industry representatives, and representatives of UNIVERSITY AND state and local governmental entities; and~~
- ~~—— (2) actively seek participation by citizens from all parts of Montana.~~

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY INCLUDE A REVIEW OF ANY RELEVANT STUDIES FROM OTHER SOURCES.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT THE STUDY RECOMMEND ANY NECESSARY COORDINATION WITH APPLICABLE FEDERAL LAWS AND CONSIDER LAWS OF OTHER STATES THAT MAY RELATE TO THE INTRODUCTION OF GENETICALLY ENGINEERED GRAINS IN MONTANA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY BE URGED TO REPORT TO THE STUDY COMMITTEE AND TO THE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEES OF THE 58TH LEGISLATURE PRIOR TO SEPTEMBER 15, 2004, REGARDING RESEARCH EFFORTS RELATED TO SAFETY, NEW GENETICALLY ENGINEERED GRAIN VARIETIES, THE ADVISABILITY AND TIMING OF RELEASE, AND THE PROPER HANDLING, PRODUCTION, TRANSPORTATION, MARKETING, TESTING, AND DISPOSITION OF NEW VARIETIES, AS WELL AS ANY EFFORTS TO OBTAIN FEDERAL FUNDING TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS OF THIS RESOLUTION FOR THE BENEFIT OF MONTANA PRODUCERS.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT THE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BE URGED TO EXPLORE AND PROMOTE APPROPRIATE BIOTECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITIES FOR MONTANA AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS.

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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