

HOUSE BILL NO. 475
INTRODUCED BY N. BIXBY

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY-BILLINGS COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY TO PROVIDE CONSTRUCTION TRADES AND WORKFORCE TRAINING AT THE MONTANA WOMEN'S PRISON; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

WHEREAS, the Montana economy and the construction trades industry need trained, skilled workers to meet future needs; and

WHEREAS, the Montana State University-Billings College of Technology is administering a U.S. Department of Labor construction trades program called Montana BILT (Building Industry Labor Training) to fill construction workforce needs through partnering with the College of Technology at Montana Tech of the University of Montana in Butte, the University of Montana College of Technology in Missoula, and Montana State University-Northern in Havre and in collaboration with the Helena College of Technology of the University of Montana, Miles City Community College, and Flathead Community College in Kalispell; and

WHEREAS, construction is a high-demand job in Montana that pays good wages and relies on skills that can be taught on a small scale at the Montana Women's Prison for transfer to jobs on a larger scale once the inmates are released from prison; and

WHEREAS, the Montana Women's Prison anticipates that programs that enhance the academic and job skills of its inmate population of women who historically have not graduated from high school or any postsecondary education institution will result in reduced recidivism, more productive members of society when the women are released from prison, and fewer social and economic costs impacting the state if these women gain the potential to adequately provide for themselves and their families; and

WHEREAS, the Billings School District No. 2 Adult Education Center currently is providing literacy and general educational development (GED) assistance as well as basic computer literacy and can work in tandem with the Montana BILT program to complement the program offerings and job preparation skills; and

WHEREAS, Montana State University-Billings could leverage funds from the U.S. Department of Labor grant to provide the Montana BILT training and curriculum at the Montana Women's Prison through a hands-on program that includes occupational and vocational counseling.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Appropriation.** The following amounts are appropriated from the general fund to Montana state university-Billings college of technology for a demonstration project to fund personnel and operating expenses, including tools and materials, for construction training of inmates at the Montana women's prison:

Fiscal Year 2008	\$85,000
Fiscal Year 2009	65,000

NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2007.

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