

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 32  
INTRODUCED BY D. MCALPIN

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO INCREASE ACCESS TO AND FUNDING FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.

WHEREAS, transportation is essential for all residents of Montana to gain access to necessities of every kind, including jobs, schools, health care facilities, and life's social and survival needs; and

WHEREAS, public transportation agencies across Montana provide services that enable thousands of Montana residents to meet their daily transportation needs without the use of automobiles; and

WHEREAS, the increased use of public transportation in Montana results in decreased congestion on our roads and freeways, makes more efficient use of transportation funds and infrastructure, decreases Montana's dependency on fossil fuels, and contributes to improved air quality; and

WHEREAS, demographic data and ridership statistics derived from public agencies and service providers across Montana show that a large percentage of riders live in households with below average income levels or are seniors and adults with disabilities and that these riders do not have any means, other than public transit, to get to jobs, schools, medical care, shops and markets, and municipal and other governmental facilities; and

WHEREAS, demographic data and ridership statistics derived from public agencies and service providers across Montana show that the remaining riders who use public transportation in Montana choose to do so for social, economic, and environmental reasons; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 30% of Montanans do not drive; and

WHEREAS, the demand for public transportation services across Montana is increasing at a rate that far exceeds the rate of increase in local, state, and federal operating and capital assistance.

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

That the State of Montana support efforts to:

(1) increase local, state, and federal funding for public transit in order to increase the availability of public transportation services to all Montana residents;

(2) expand the level and quality of public transportation choices, such as passenger rail, rural, and urban

bus transit, car and van pool, and paratransit services throughout Montana, resulting in more accessible, convenient, and affordable public and private transportation for all Montanans; and

(3) create strong incentives that are available to all Montana residents and businesses for using modes of transportation that reduce traffic congestion, conserve resources, improve community health, and build a prosperous economic climate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana Legislature endorse the inclusion of public transit as an essential element in any statewide energy policy developed by the Legislative or Executive Branch of Montana state government.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana Legislature recognize public mass transit in Montana as a propitious testing ground for the use of alternative fuels and for testing equipment that reduces emissions and improves air quality.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent by the Secretary of State to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United States, the Attorney General of the United States, the United States Secretary of Transportation, Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer, and Montana's Congressional Delegation.

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