

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 52
INTRODUCED BY S. DICKENSON

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIETAL COSTS OF GAMBLING WITH THE PURPOSE OF INCREASING AWARENESS ABOUT THE INDUSTRY AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE LIVES OF MONTANA CITIZENS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES.

WHEREAS, the impact of gambling in Montana is not well-documented in terms of societal costs but is well-recorded in terms of revenues, which from the video gambling tax alone surpassed \$62 million in 2006 with nearly \$57.3 million of that going into the state general fund and with revenue increases from the video gambling tax projected at 4.5% in 2007 and 6.3% in each of the next 2 fiscal years; and

WHEREAS, various states and institutions are conducting studies that look at the economic and societal impacts of gambling and, in particular, at the impacts of problem and pathological gambling on individuals and communities; and

WHEREAS, more information is needed for the Legislature to develop policies to deal with problem gambling or pathological gambling, an impulse control disorder listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders of the American Psychiatric Association; and

WHEREAS, the Council on Problem Gambling, an industry-based group, has been providing treatment options and has requested more information on societal and economic influences affecting problem gambling in order to develop solutions and better evaluate the effectiveness of the treatments and the program.

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

(1) 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:

(a) review and update, whenever possible, past studies conducted on gambling in Montana, including the positive and negative impacts;

(b) examine the results and recommendations of studies conducted in other states or nationwide for their possible correlation to the economic and societal impacts of gambling in Montana, including convenience gambling and problem gambling; and

(c) include information from the Department of Justice, the Department of Public Health and Human Services, the Department of Revenue, the Banking and Financial Institutions Division of the Department of Administration, the Department of Commerce, and court records regarding the effect of gambling on any of the following:

- (i) bankruptcies;
- (ii) suicide;
- (iii) embezzlement and theft;
- (iv) lack of child support;
- (v) abuse within families;
- (vi) increased requests for public assistance; and
- (vii) economic impacts on main street businesses.

(2) That the study include information on tribal gambling compacts and relevant details about state and tribal relations in regard to gambling on reservations.

(3) That the study incorporate analyses from studies that identify:

- (a) risk factors for problem gambling;
- (b) recommendations regarding programs or treatments; and
- (c) outcomes or effectiveness of the programs or treatments.

(4) That, if the information provides clear evidence of negative impacts connected to gambling, the study include recommendations for increasing public awareness of the problem and recommendations for policies intended to decrease negative impacts.

(5) That the study include representatives of the gambling industry and other businesses impacted by the gambling industry, along with consumers and members of the financial, legal, law enforcement, and counseling industries as well as representatives of cities and towns, counties, and the state.

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, 2008.

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 61st Legislature.

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