

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 53
INTRODUCED BY W. GRINDE

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING A LEGISLATIVE INTERIM STUDY OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS AND A REPORT TO THE 61ST LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, Montanans expect clean and fair elections and are concerned about the rapidly escalating amount of money required to run for elective office in Montana; and

WHEREAS, the League of Women Voters of the United States reports that a better elections system, called "Clean Elections", is already in place in seven states and two municipalities and that this is a proved way to improve campaign financing; and

WHEREAS, under a Clean Elections system, eligible candidates receive a grant of public money for their campaigns so that qualified people who would otherwise not run for election can run competitive campaigns on level playing fields; and

WHEREAS, Clean Elections would likely encourage more participation in elections in Montana; and

WHEREAS, an interim study would provide for a much needed comprehensive review of Montana's campaign finance laws; and

WHEREAS, an interim study provides a forum for healthy bipartisan debate among legislators, stakeholders, and the general public about how best to approach campaign financing reforms.

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 Montana's current campaign finance laws;
- (2) examine campaign finance reform, including clean election laws adopted in other jurisdictions; and
- (3) investigate and analyze options for public financing of campaigns.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the appropriate interim committee or sufficient staff resources be directed to develop recommendations for campaign finance reform and publically financed campaigns in Montana.

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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