

## 1 HOUSE BILL NO. 135

2 INTRODUCED BY M. MACDONALD

3 BY REQUEST OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

4  
5 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE SCHOOL FUNDING INTERIM COMMITTEE;  
6 REQUIRING THE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND COSTS RELATED  
7 TO A BASIC SYSTEM OF FREE QUALITY PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS; PROVIDING  
8 FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP; REQUIRING ISSUANCE OF A REPORT; APPROPRIATING \$250,000  
9 FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO THE LEGISLATIVE SERVICES DIVISION FOR SUPPORT OF THE  
10 COMMITTEE AND ANY CONTRACTED SERVICES; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE."

11

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

13

14 NEW SECTION. **Section 1. School funding interim committee.** (1) There is a school funding interim  
15 committee. Pursuant to 20-9-309(5), the committee shall:

16 (a) conduct a study to reassess the educational needs and costs related to the basic system of free  
17 quality public elementary and secondary schools; and

18 (b) if necessary, incorporate the results of those assessments into the state's funding formula.

19 (2) In conducting the study, the committee shall:

20 (a) review the work and conclusions of the quality schools interim committee established in 2005;

21 (b) review how the state's education funding policy has evolved as a result of litigation;

22 (c) consider any recommendations provided by other interim or standing legislative committees;

23 (d) seek input from representatives from the board of public education, the office of public instruction,  
24 the governor's office, private organizations, professional educators, school trustees, and members of the public;  
25 and

26 (e) consider the state's existing and projected financial resources as well as the needs and concerns  
27 of Montana taxpayers.

28 (3) The members of the committee are:

29 (a) four members of the house of representatives, two from each party, appointed by the speaker of the  
30 house in consultation with the house majority leader and the house minority leader;

- 1 (b) four members of the senate, two from each party, appointed by the president of the senate; and  
2 (c) as ex-officio, nonvoting members:  
3 (i) the presiding officer of the board of public education or the presiding officer's designee;  
4 (ii) the superintendent of public instruction or the superintendent's designee; and  
5 (iii) the governor or the governor's designee.
- 6 (4) The committee shall select its presiding officer from among the voting members at the first meeting  
7 of the committee.
- 8 (5) The committee is attached for administrative purposes to the legislative services division.
- 9 (6) The committee may:
- 10 (a) authorize research and studies to be conducted by reputable and reliable experts in the public or  
11 private sectors; and  
12 (b) request research and analysis from the legislative fiscal division, the office of public instruction, the  
13 department of revenue, and any other state agency or entity that maintains information or data relevant to the  
14 study.
- 15 (7) On or before September 15, 2014, the committee shall issue a report on the committee's findings and  
16 recommendations.
- 17
- 18 **NEW SECTION. Section 2. Appropriation.** There is appropriated \$250,000 from the general fund to  
19 the legislative services division for the biennium beginning July 1, 2013, to support the activities of the committee  
20 and any contracted services the committee considers to be warranted.
- 21
- 22 **NEW SECTION. Section 3. Effective date.** [This act] is effective on passage and approval.
- 23 - END -