

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 31

INTRODUCED BY E. LIESER

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUIRING A STUDY OF OPTIONS TO PERMIT, INSPECT, AND MAINTAIN SEPTIC SYSTEMS.

WHEREAS, a properly designed, constructed, and maintained septic system can provide long-term, effective treatment of household wastewater and is key to the property value of a home or business; and

WHEREAS, a poorly maintained septic system may malfunction and could cost thousands of dollars to repair or replace in addition to contaminating drinking water; and

WHEREAS, numerous studies show that septic leachate is transported by either surface or ground water flow through lake-bottom sediments into lake water, elevating nutrient concentrations; and

WHEREAS, a recent study by the Whitefish Lake Institute confirmed three areas on Whitefish Lake with septic leachate contaminations as well as areas of low, medium, and high potential for future contamination; and

WHEREAS, it is unclear the extent to which counties may regulate permitting, inspection, and maintenance of individual septic systems.

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) evaluate current state and local regulations for permitting, inspecting, and maintaining septic systems and compare those regulations to other states; and

(2) examine statewide and local options, including those not related to government regulation, that would ensure timely and economical permitting, inspection, and maintenance of septic systems.

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, 2014.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,



1 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 64th Legislature.

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