

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 14

INTRODUCED BY OLSON, WITTICH

BY REQUEST OF THE SENATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT STANDING COMMITTEE

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY TO IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE COMBINED PRIMARY AND SCHOOL ELECTIONS FEASIBLE.

WHEREAS, Senate Bill No. 140, which would have combined school and certain primary elections, was introduced in the 63rd Legislature and tabled by the Senate Local Government Standing Committee after the Committee agreed to request an interim study directed at identifying ways to make combined elections feasible; and

WHEREAS, an interim study would focus an appropriate interim committee on identifying the technical elements of election administration that would need to be reconciled to have combined elections, including varying deadlines, election dates, authorities responsible for conducting and paying for elections, and varying local government boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the goal of an interim study is to provide the 64th Legislature with a plan for implementation of combined elections and coordination among applicable government agencies.

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 study local government and school district election laws and procedures to identify opportunities to combine elections.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study examine:

(1) existing dates, deadlines, and other procedures in Montana law that would require adjustment in order to conduct combined elections; and

(2) changes that election administrators would need to implement to combine primary and school elections, including:

(a) accommodating various administrative boundaries for jurisdictions holding elections, including state



1 legislative, county, school district, city, and other district elections, and reducing voter confusion about these
2 boundaries;

3 (b) administering the technical elements of combined elections, including the effects on overseas and
4 military voters, different poll location and opening and closing times, and which local government authority is
5 responsible for election costs; and

6 (c) determining the responsibility for conducting combined elections that involve county election
7 administrators and school district officials.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee request participation of stakeholders in the election
9 process, including county election administrators, the Office of the Secretary of State, school administrators and
10 officials, and other interested parties as determined by the committee.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the study is assigned to staff, any findings or conclusions be
12 presented to and reviewed by an appropriate committee designated by the Legislative Council.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review
14 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2014.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,
16 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 64th Legislature.

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