

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 3
2 INTRODUCED BY M. CUFFE

3
4 A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA SUPPORTING THE
5 PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION TO LINCOLN COUNTY FOR LOSSES INCURRED DUE TO THE
6 CONSTRUCTION OF LIBBY DAM.

7
8 WHEREAS, Libby Dam, located in Lincoln County, Montana, is the fourth dam constructed under the
9 Columbia River Treaty, which the Canadian government and the United States government entered into in 1964,
10 and is located on the Kootenai River, which is the third largest tributary to the Columbia River and contributes
11 almost 20% of the total water in the lower Columbia River; and

12 WHEREAS, Libby Dam was dedicated on August 24, 1975, and spans the Kootenai River 17 miles
13 upstream from the town of Libby, Montana; and

14 WHEREAS, Lake Koocanusa, the reservoir behind Libby Dam, extends 90 miles north of the dam, with
15 48 miles of Lake Koocanusa located in Lincoln County and the remainder in British Columbia, Canada; and

16 WHEREAS, Libby Dam, in Montana's northwest corner, and three dams in Canada were constructed to
17 protect downstream areas from flooding, and Libby Dam holds back an average of 5,800,000 acre-feet of water;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, economic benefits have been derived from the storage of these floodwaters and the
20 coordinated, timely release of those waters for generation of electricity, irrigation, navigation, and recreation; and

21 WHEREAS, the construction of Libby Dam placed many thousands of acres of land in Lincoln County
22 under water, leading to decreased real property tax revenues for the county and a loss of timber sales and wildlife
23 and fish habitat, among other losses; and

24 WHEREAS, the Canadian government was compensated for construction of the dams and storage of
25 floodwaters through a sharing of dollars on electricity from additional power generated at downstream dams and
26 hydropower generating facilities, leading to the formation of the Columbia Basin Trust; and

27 WHEREAS, citizens of Lincoln County did not participate in the negotiations for the terms of the Columbia
28 River Treaty and no compensation has been received by Lincoln County; and

29 WHEREAS, the renegotiation of the treaty is currently being considered, and there is a possibility that
30 compensation could be provided to Lincoln County as a result of federal legislation, litigation, determination of



1 regulations, and the renegotiation of the treaty.

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3 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF

4 MONTANA:

5 That the House of Representatives of the State of Montana supports the payment of compensation to

6 Lincoln County for the decreased real property tax revenues, the loss of timber sales and wildlife and fish habitat,

7 and other losses due to the construction of Libby Dam.

8 - END -