

1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 11

2 INTRODUCED BY M. PHILLIPS

3

4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
5 MONTANA REQUESTING THAT THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE
6 CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION RECONSIDER THE APPROPRIATENESS OF
7 LISTING BRUCELLA ABORTUS AS A BIOTERRORIST AGENT TO FACILITATE RESEARCH INTO THE
8 TRANSMISSION OF THE PATHOGEN TO CATTLE AND DOMESTIC BISON.

9

10 WHEREAS, *Brucella abortus* is listed as a potential bioterrorist agent or "select agent" by the United
11 States Department of Agriculture and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and

12 WHEREAS, while other strains of *Brucella* are highly pathogenic, *Brucella abortus* rarely infects humans
13 and is easily treated; and

14 WHEREAS, Yellowstone National Park harbors a reservoir of the *Brucella abortus* pathogen in elk and
15 bison, and as long as this reservoir exists, final eradication of brucellosis is impossible in Montana, Idaho, and
16 Wyoming because elk and bison can continually reinfect the region's cattle and domestic bison each time the
17 disease is controlled; and

18 WHEREAS, in order to eradicate *Brucella abortus* in Yellowstone National Park, a vaccine must be
19 developed that is effective for cattle and domestic bison, but because research on select agents is highly
20 regulated and requires costly investments in secure infrastructure, the number of facilities that are able to perform
21 research on the pathogen in large animals has been greatly reduced; and

22 WHEREAS, although the *Brucella abortus* pathogen is prevalent and highly problematic outside
23 laboratory doors, because of the select agent listing it cannot be brought inside for the studies that could lead to
24 an effective vaccine, which is an absurd situation for veterinary research facilities in the region.

25

26 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
27 STATE OF MONTANA:

28 That the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the
29 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

30 (1) reconsider the appropriateness of listing *Brucella abortus* as a select agent;

- 1 (2) focus bioterrorism regulations on the Brucella pathogens that pose the greatest risk to humans; and
2 (3) facilitate research into the transmission of the pathogen to cattle and domestic bison by promoting
3 research to develop an efficacious vaccine and delivery system.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send a copy of this resolution to the directors
5 of the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the Centers for
6 Disease Control and Prevention and to the Montana Congressional Delegation.

7 - END -