

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 24

INTRODUCED BY D. SANDS, W. CURDY, R. EHLI, B. HOVEN, M. LANG, M. MACDONALD,
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A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRITOURISM IN MONTANA; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 66TH LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, tourism in Montana attracted 10.5 million nonresident visitors in 2010, who spent an estimated \$2.48 billion, according to the U.S. Travel Association; and

WHEREAS, rural America is a popular tourist destination and agritourism is increasing, according to data from the U.S. Census of Agriculture; and

WHEREAS, agritourism may include such activities as farm tours, farm-based lodging, children's educational day camps, country overnight bed and breakfasts, bird-hunting preserves, bird and wildlife watching, corn mazes and haunted forests, petting farms, hands-on u-pick, wineries and vineyards, breweries, hay rides and sleigh rides, farmers markets, and rural weddings; and

WHEREAS, the challenges of agritourism may include interference with normal farm activities, an increase in a farm's risk and liability, government regulations, zoning, signage, food-related inspections, licenses or fees, risk management planning associated with animal exhibits, and animal-human health concerns, according to the Agricultural Marketing Resource Center at Iowa State University; and

WHEREAS, current and future agritourism businesses may benefit from a legislative study of the subject, identifying advantages, opportunities, and challenges.

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 examine how the state of Montana may aid in the development of agritourism in Montana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee consider:

- (1) any relevant reports, analyses, or related information;



