

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 27

INTRODUCED BY K. KELKER

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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 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF THE MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 66TH LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, in 1993, the Montana Legislature and the Board of Regents agreed that the system of higher education in Montana was in need of a reorganization; and

WHEREAS, the goals for this reorganization included:

- (1) a single, unified system of higher education, a totally integrated approach, not merely a collection of separate units;
- (2) a distinguished system that promotes not only unity but also a shared statewide sense of ownership, a positive, mutually supportive relationship among units, faculty, and staff communicating and working for common system goals;
- (3) continued recognition of the unique qualities that each institution shares with its community while building toward greater unification of higher education in Montana;
- (4) a shared commitment to the public funding of higher education while simultaneously seeking to enhance and stabilize the revenue base through alternative funding options; and
- (5) a focused effort on systemwide choices that will result in cost savings, cost containment, and improved services; and

WHEREAS, in the nearly 25 years since this reorganization, technological advances, demographic changes, cost increases, workforce needs, and other factors have been greatly impacting higher education; and

WHEREAS, maintaining a world-class system of higher education to benefit the people of the state of Montana is a top priority of the Legislature, the Board of Regents, and the Governor.

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



1 section 5-5-217, MCA, to study the governance structure of the Montana University System.

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study:

3 (1) work in collaboration with the Board of Regents, the Commissioner of Higher Education, the
4 Governor, and the administration, faculty, and staff from units of the Montana University System;

5 (2) to the extent possible and in the interest of the efficient use of time and other resources, integrate
6 this legislative effort with Board of Regents processes already in place, including the ongoing development of the
7 Montana University System Strategic Plan;

8 (3) review the goals of the previous Montana University System restructuring to assess whether the goals
9 have been met and whether new goals should be established for the future;

10 (4) investigate the effects of the restructuring on all units of the system;

11 (5) examine how the restructuring has impacted the 4-year regional universities and 2-year colleges of
12 the system, including:

13 (a) enrollment;

14 (b) course and program offerings; and

15 (c) serving workforce development needs in their communities and regions; and

16 (6) determine whether modifications to the current governance structure would improve the university
17 system, increase efficiency, and benefit the people of the state of Montana.

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review
19 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2018.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,
21 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 66th Legislature.

22 - END -