



A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF WHETHER UTILITIES IN MONTANA SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO ALLOW CUSTOMER CHOICE OF NATURAL GAS SUPPLIER.

WHEREAS, competition already exists in certain segments of the market, and the benefits of competition should be available to all natural gas customers; and

WHEREAS, any transition to competition should protect customers and utilities from economic harm while allowing entities the opportunity to compete effectively.

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 gather accurate and complete evidence of costs from utilities in order to:

- (1) identify:
 - (a) the costs for monopoly utilities to open their gas systems to consumer choice;
 - (b) the merits and complications of customer choice companies to be regulated by the appropriate state agency;
 - (c) in consultation with the appropriate state agencies, the costs, if any that will be passed on to consumers; and
 - (d) the merits and complications of deregulating a natural gas utility; and
- (2) make recommendations on:
 - (a) providing workable competition with a level playing field for all buyers and sellers in Montana; and
 - (b) ensuring that existing commitments of utilities arising from past decisions made pursuant to historical regulatory and legal principles are addressed in a fair and reasonable manner.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the study is assigned to staff, any findings or conclusions be

presented to and reviewed by an appropriate committee designated by the Legislative Council.

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

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

- END -

I hereby certify that the within joint resolution,
HJ 0028, originated in the House.

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2017.

Chief Clerk of the House

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2017.

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 28

INTRODUCED BY L. BISHOP, N. MCCONNELL, D. SKEES, D. ZOLNIKOV

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