

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 31

INTRODUCED BY A. HERTZ

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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 LOCAL ZONING AND STATE AND LOCAL SUBDIVISION AND WATER AND SANITATION LAWS AND REGULATORY PROCESSES AND HOW THEY AFFECT DEVELOPMENT AND THE AVAILABILITY OF WORKFORCE HOUSING.

WHEREAS, access to safe, affordable housing for both renters and homeowners is essential to Montana's social and economic welfare; and

WHEREAS, families who pay more than 30% of their income for housing are considered cost-burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care; and

WHEREAS, rents in Montana have increased more than 5% a year over the past 3 years; and

WHEREAS, Montana's homeownership rate has steadily decreased from 70% to 66% over the past decade, and the current Native American homeownership rate in Montana is less than 50%; and

WHEREAS, homeownership has been an essential element of the American Dream for decades; and

WHEREAS, documented social benefits of homeownership include increased charitable activity, greater civic participation, neighborhood attachment, lower incidences of teen pregnancy, higher high school graduation rates, better physical and psychological health, and significant increases in wealth and in reported life satisfaction, self-esteem, and happiness; and

WHEREAS, the increased availability of workforce housing will increase opportunity for economic development by helping to attract and retain a skilled workforce.

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 local zoning and state and local subdivision and water and sanitation review laws, regulations, fees, and processes that affect development and that impact the availability of workforce housing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study include review of:



- 1 (1) statutes governing county and municipal zoning;
- 2 (2) statutes governing local government and state agency subdivision review;
- 3 (3) local zoning and subdivision regulations;
- 4 (4) local growth policies and area plans;
- 5 (5) state agency and local government processes and review fees and state agency administrative rules
- 6 that govern review of subdivision applications;
- 7 (6) the need for and availability of workforce housing in Montana;
- 8 (7) costs to local governments, developers, and state agencies for local and state subdivision review and
- 9 how those costs affect housing prices; and
- 10 (8) ways to improve land use planning and other regulatory processes that may enhance the availability
- 11 of workforce housing and other developments in a manner that protects public health, safety, and welfare and
- 12 that minimizes adverse impacts to water resources, wildlife, and the natural environment.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee seek information and participation from local
14 governments, state agencies, organizations representing realtors, builders, land use planners, environmental
15 interests, property owners, affordable housing advocates, developers, and any other person or entity that the
16 committee considers appropriate.

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the study is assigned to staff, any findings or conclusions be
18 presented to and reviewed by an appropriate committee designated by the Legislative Council.

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

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

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