1   SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 18

2   INTRODUCED BY M. BLASDEL

3   BY REQUEST OF THE SENATE ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS STANDING COMMITTEE

4

5   A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF

6   MONTANA SUPPORTING POLICIES FOR ADVANCED TRANSMISSION LINES.

7

8   WHEREAS, a secure, reliable, and resilient power grid integrating generation resources serves as a

9   foundation of a growing economy and is critical to national security; and

10   WHEREAS, regulators, policymakers, and consumers expect generating resources and the grid to

11   perform extremely reliably; and

12   WHEREAS, a significant portion of the nation's transmission facilities are old and urgently require

13   replacement and substantial upgrading; and

14   WHEREAS, environmental regulations, state renewable and clean energy portfolio standards with

15   mandated deadlines, state and federal tax policies, other economic factors, and technology developments are

16   causing some electric generation resources to retire, while substantial replacement generation, some of it fueled

17   by intermittent resources, is being or is planned to be sited at other locations on the electric grid; and

18   WHEREAS, new innovative cost-effective transmission technologies, including but not limited to

19   high-capacity and high-efficiency conductors and compact transmission towers, are commercially available with

20   revolutionary, extraordinarily high-performance levels compared to other technologies to address aged circuit and

21   new generation issues, including greater increases in grid capacity, greater improvements in energy transfers,

22   significantly greater stability and resiliency, greater efficient use of existing and new rights-of-way, substantial

23   reduction in transmission line losses, streamlining siting and construction activities, and more rapidly bringing new

24   and replacement circuits into service; and

25   WHEREAS, new and advanced replacement transmission facilities can be designed and deployed to

26   enable a wide variety of new generating resources and can address technical, environmental, and aesthetic

27   issues that could impede or limit the development and operation of resources so states can achieve public policy

28   goals on set schedules; and

29   WHEREAS, crowded utility corridors often allow little room for expansion; and

30   WHEREAS, some states have established minimal requirements for approving transmission projects that

1   use existing corridors with de minimis impacts; and

2   WHEREAS, at least one state has established a policy that encourages regulators and grid operators

3   to support and encourage consideration of advanced transmission line technologies to cost-effectively deliver

4   benefits; and

5   WHEREAS, policy associations, including the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners,

6   the Southern Legislative Conference, the Midwest Legislative Conference, the Council of State Governments,

7   and the Southern States Energy Board, recognize the specific benefits of technologies to quickly and substantially

8   modernize the grid and improve generating resource integration; and

9   WHEREAS, great benefits will flow from advanced technologies on a cost-per-energy-unit-delivered or

10   other basis, so state legislators, electric utilities, grid operators, and state public service commissions are

11   encouraged to optimize investment decisions around the cost-effective use of technologies to yield extraordinarily

12   high performance from them.

13

14   NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE

15   STATE OF MONTANA:

16   That the 65th Legislature encourage efforts to support:

17   (1)   the investigation and consideration of new advanced transmission technologies that offer

18   revolutionary performance benefits when replacing aged transmission infrastructure;

19   (2)   the evaluation of new advanced transmission technologies to determine whether they are best able

20   to cost-effectively ensure the continued reliable delivery of electricity while providing revolutionary greater

21   capacity and revolutionary enhanced efficiency on schedules required to meet the state's public policy objectives;

22   (3)   the consideration of the ability of these technologies to greatly reduce environmental and visual

23   impacts to communities; and

24   (4)   the consideration of the ability of these and other technologies to greatly reduce the overall cost of

25   energy delivery.

26   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the 65th Legislature encourage efforts to work with regional

27   transmission organizations, independent system operators, and other planning authorities to compare the

28   cost-effective, revolutionary performance of advanced electric transmission infrastructure options to the

29   performance of other technologies for increasing grid capacity, reducing transmission line losses, improving

30   energy transfers, making more efficient use of rights-of-way, improving energy efficiency, and encouraging the

1 shortest timeframes be put in service by streamlining siting and construction activities in their planning,

2 evaluation, and oversight of transmission grid development, especially by utilizing existing transmission corridors.

3   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the 65th Legislature encourage the inclusion of supplemental or new

4 policies of transmission facilities that promote revolutionary, rather than incremental, performance and the

5 benefits of the appropriate use of cost-effective advanced electric transmission technologies in support of their

6 interest in the continued, timely provision of affordable, reliable electricity to consumers.

7   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to the Governor OF MONTANA, THE

8 GOVERNORS OF NORTH DAKOTA, SOUTH DAKOTA, WYOMING, AND IDAHO, members of the Montana Public Service

9 Commission, THE MONTANA RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES' ASSOCIATION, THE BONNEVILLE POWER

10 ADMINISTRATION, THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST ECONOMIC REGION, NORTHWESTERN ENERGY, MONTANA-DAKOTA

11 UTILITIES CO., and members of Montana's Congressional Delegation.

12   - END -