

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 17

2 INTRODUCED BY W. CURDY

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4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
5 MONTANA URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO ENACT LEGISLATION THAT ENABLES
6 FEDERAL AGENCIES TO EFFECTIVELY COMBAT AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES, INCLUDING THE USE OF
7 MANDATORY INSPECTION AND DECONTAMINATION PROGRAMS AND THE APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS
8 NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THEM.

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10 WHEREAS, eradication of aquatic invasive species is a matter of national concern, transcending state
11 lines; and

12 WHEREAS, the presence and spread of quagga and zebra mussels, collectively referred to as dreissenid
13 mussels, is a matter of growing and alarming concern in the West; and

14 WHEREAS, shipping vessels from Eastern Europe introduced dreissenids to the United States in the
15 Great Lakes region in the 1980s; and

16 WHEREAS, mussels have now spread to more than 30 states, including Montana, after tests confirmed
17 the presence of mussel larvae in Tiber Reservoir in 2016; and

18 WHEREAS, in its 5-year lifetime, a single quagga or zebra mussel produces about 5 million eggs,
19 100,000 of which reach adulthood, in turn producing half a billion offspring total; and

20 WHEREAS, mussels spread, in large part and across state lines, by attaching to exposed hard surfaces
21 or catching a ride in ballast water and being transported from water body to water body; and

22 WHEREAS, it is paramount to prevent the spread of invasive mussels to uninfested waterways, especially
23 the Columbia River Basin -- the last major uninfested water system in the continental United States -- where it
24 is estimated the annual cost of addressing an established population of dreissenids would be almost \$500 million;
25 and

26 WHEREAS, a recent economic impact study conducted by the University of Montana Flathead Biological
27 Station found Montana's economy could see more than \$230 million in annual mitigation costs and lost revenue
28 if dreissenids become established in the state; and

29 WHEREAS, the application of effective inspection and decontamination practices as watercraft leave
30 infested waters is the first, best, and most cost-effective line of defense against the proliferation of dreissenids;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, many western states, including Montana, are leading the fight by enacting laws to establish
3 watercraft inspection and decontamination programs within their boundaries; and

4 WHEREAS, these programs are challenged by a lack of mandatory watercraft inspection and
5 decontamination programs at infested water bodies administered by federal agencies, from which infested
6 watercraft are routinely transported to Montana and other western states; and

7 WHEREAS, while some voluntary inspection and decontamination programs are operated by federal
8 agencies, mostly at the request of and in collaboration with states, the federal agencies are hampered by a lack
9 of clear statutory authority to conduct mandatory inspection and decontamination of all high-risk watercraft, such
10 as long-term slipped and moored watercraft.

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12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
13 STATE OF MONTANA:

14 (1) That the United States Congress be urged to enact legislation that:

15 (a) enables and funds federal agencies, including the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of
16 Reclamation, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the National Park Service, and the United States Forest
17 Service to effectively combat aquatic invasive species, especially dreissenid mussels, and eliminate gaps in their
18 management and control, including the authority and funds to conduct mandatory inspection and decontamination
19 programs to limit the movement of aquatic invasive species into, out of, or across the waters of the United States;

20 (b) requires consultation with states and tribes regarding the location of watercraft inspection stations for
21 the highest likelihood of preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species at and from federal water bodies;

22 (c) requires assistance to be provided to states for rapid response to any aquatic invasive species
23 infestation; and

24 (d) provides funding to states for watercraft inspection stations and aquatic invasive species control
25 projects to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species into and out of federal water bodies.

26 (2) That the Secretary of State send a copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, the
27 Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, each
28 member of the Montana Congressional Delegation, the secretaries of the United States Department of the Interior
29 and Department of Agriculture, the directors of the United States Bureau of Land Management and the National
30 Park Service, the commissioner of the United States Bureau of Reclamation, and the chief of the United States

1 Forest Service.

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