| 1 | JOINT RESOLUTION NO |
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| 2 | INTRODUCED BY |
| 3 | (Primary Sponsor) |
| 4 | A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF |
| 5 | MONTANA URGING CONGRESS, THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, AND THE BUREAU OF |
| 6 | RECLAMATION TO REPAIR THE FUNDING ALLOCATION AND AUTHORIZE FUNDING FOR THE |
| 7 | REPLACEMENT AND REHABILITATION OF THE ST. MARY RIVER DIVERSION AND MILK RIVER |
| 8 | PROJECT. |
| 9 | |
| 10 | WHEREAS, the United States Bureau of Reclamation authorized the Milk River Project in 1903 to |
| 11 | provide water for irrigation by means of the St. Mary River dam and diversion, 29 miles of canals, 2 sets of |
| 12 | siphon tubes, 5 hydraulic drop structures, Lake Sherburne, Bowdoin National Wildlife Refuge, and the Fresno |
| 13 | and Nelson reservoirs; and |
| 14 | WHEREAS, since its completion, the Milk River Project provides drinking water to more than 19,000 |
| 15 | people along the Hi-Line from Havre to the confluence with the Missouri River near Nashua; and |
| 16 | WHEREAS, water from Lake Sherburne and the Fresno and Nelson reservoirs supplies more than 700 |
| 17 | farms that feed 1,000,000 people annually, provides water compact requirements for the Blackfeet Tribe and |
| 18 | the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine Tribes of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, and creates recreation |
| 19 | opportunities and critical habitat for fish and wildlife; and |
| 20 | WHEREAS, 6 out of every 10 years the Milk River in the United States would be dry without the St. |
| 21 | Mary River diversion; and |
| 22 | WHEREAS, for more than 20 years the Milk River Project has been the focus of past and present |
| 23 | congressional members to provide funding for the repair and replacement of the 106-year-old system; and |
| 24 | WHEREAS, after the Drop 5 structure failed on May 17, 2020, Milk River Project beneficiaries paid |
| 25 | 48% of the \$8 million cost to replace the Drop 2 and Drop 5 structures and to improve the Drop 1 structure, and |
| 26 | WHEREAS, with the total cost for replacement and rehabilitation being estimated at more than \$200 |
| 27 | million, the current project funding allocation that requires project beneficiaries to pay for 74% of this estimated |
| 28 | cost is not sustainable for those who rely on the Milk River. |
| | |



67th Legislature

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| 2 | NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF |
| 3 | THE STATE OF MONTANA: |
| 4 | That the State of Montana support funding for the repair and replacement of the St. Mary River |
| 5 | diversion and Milk River Project immediately and ask for appropriation funding to complete the much-needed |
| 6 | repairs and replacement of the diversion and project. |
| 7 | BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the United States Congress be urged to fix the United States |
| 8 | Bureau of Reclamation's funding allocation required of project beneficiaries to make it reasonable and |
| 9 | affordable. |
| 10 | BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send copies of this resolution to the Montana |
| 11 | Congressional Delegation, the President of the United States, the United States Secretary of the Interior, and |
| 12 | the Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation. |
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- END -

