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1	HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 28
2	INTRODUCED BY E. HILL
3	
4	A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
5	MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF THE FEASIBILITY OF COMBINING SCHOOL
6	ELECTIONS WITH OTHER ELECTIONS IN ORDER TO IMPROVE VOTER TURNOUT, SEEK
7	EFFICIENCIES, AND ENSURE ELECTION INTEGRITY.
8	
9	WHEREAS, combining school elections with other elections is a perennial topic of discussion within the
10	Montana Legislature evidenced by no less than six legislative proposals since 2001; and
11	WHEREAS, the 2013-2014 State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Interim Committee conducted
12	the Senate Joint Resolution No. 14 study on combining school elections and primary elections but ultimately set
13	that question aside to first address various inconsistencies in existing election law, which led to the passage of
14	House Bill No. 84, a massive clean-up bill with 264 sections, enacted by the 2015 legislature; and
15	WHEREAS, with those inconsistencies now addressed, returning to the question of combining school
16	elections with either primary or general elections is in order, and because of the complexities involved would be
17	most appropriately undertaken during the interim.
18	
19	NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
20	THE STATE OF MONTANA:
21	That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee or statutory
22	committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to study election laws and
23	procedures to identify opportunities to combine school elections with either primary or general elections.
24	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study examine:
25	(1) the current state of school elections, including voter turnout and the costs of administration, and
26	the potential benefits and drawbacks of combined elections;
27	(2) previous legislative proposals and studies regarding combining school elections with either
28	primary or general elections;



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(3)	existing dates,	, deadlines, a	ind other	procedures	in both	Montana	election	law and	school	law that
would require adjustment in order to conduct combined elections; and										

- (4) changes that election administrators would need to implement to combine school elections with either primary or general elections, including:
- (a) accommodating various administrative boundaries for jurisdictions holding elections, including state legislative, county, school district, city, and other district elections, and reducing voter confusion about these boundaries;
- (b) administering the technical elements of combined elections, including the effects on overseas and military voters, different poll location and opening and closing times, and which local government authority is responsible for election costs; and
- (c) determining the responsibility for conducting combined elections that involve county election administrators and school district officials.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee request the participation of stakeholders in the election process, including county election administrators, the Office of the Secretary of State, the Office of Public Instruction, school administrators and officials, and other interested parties as determined by the committee.

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, 2022.

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 68th Legislature.

23 - END -

