



A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF THE ADEQUACY OF THE MONTANA WOMEN'S PRISON FACILITY AND PROGRAMS.

WHEREAS, the building currently used as the Montana Women's Prison was purchased by the Department of Corrections in 1994 and previously served as a psychiatric hospital before being converted to a prison facility; and

WHEREAS, the Montana Women's Prison's last major expansion occurred in 2003; and

WHEREAS, the Montana Women's Prison has 250 beds and houses approximately 225 felony inmates; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of the inmates held at the Montana Women's Prison are American Indian; and

WHEREAS, access to equal programming for educational opportunities and job training is not adequate or equal to the men's facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Montana Women's Prison has an aging inmate population and lacks a geriatric facility comparable to that for male inmates; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Corrections recently contracted for a Strategic Development Master Plan for department facilities, including facility analysis and recommendations for the Montana Women's Prison.

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 or statutory committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to study the Montana Women's

Prison facility and available programs. The study must examine:

- (1) the adequacy of the prison facility to meet the living, programming, training, and educational needs of the inmate population;
- (2) the adequacy of the facility to meet the unique needs of an aging population;
- (3) the demographics of the inmate population, including the number of women of color, veterans, inmates who are parents, educational level, and crimes for which they were sentenced;
- (4) available and needed workforce training programs, educational programs, and counseling and therapeutic resources, including those resources specific to survivors of sexual assault and violence and other Adverse Childhood Experience Score traumas and for the special and medical needs of women who are parents, veterans, and Indigenous or people of color;
- (5) the adequacy of Prison Rape Elimination Act programming, training, and reporting procedures related to sexual assault in the prison;
- (6) issues related to discharge and parole, reentry programs, diversion opportunities specific to women, and the number of women who reenter the corrections system through violations of community supervision terms or through conviction for a new crime; and
- (7) the number of female youths in the custody of the Department of Corrections, including the nature of the residential placements and programs available for those female youths.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study involve the Department of Corrections, local government officials, community corrections contractors, victims services providers, families and friends of inmates or others involved in the correctional system, and other appropriate stakeholders identified by the interim 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.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
SJ 26, originated in the Senate.

Secretary of the Senate

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2021.

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2021.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 26

INTRODUCED BY D. SANDS, S. MORIGEAU, S. WEBBER, R. LYNCH, K. KELKER, D. LENZ, B. USHER, J.

WINDY BOY

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