

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 38

2 INTRODUCED BY C. KNUDSEN

3
4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
5 MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF MONTANA'S PHARMACISTS' SERVICES TO ENHANCE
6 ACCESS TO CARE; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO
7 THE 68TH LEGISLATURE.

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9 WHEREAS, the Human Resources and Services Administration recognizes a shortage of primary care
10 physicians in Montana affecting patient access to health care services; and

11 WHEREAS, there are high rates of patients not meeting treatment goals such as diabetes, high blood
12 pressure, high cholesterol, and depression leading to high rates of complications, emergency visits, and
13 hospitalizations; and

14 WHEREAS, there are increased hospitalization and rehospitalization rates for chronic medical
15 conditions when a person also has a mental illness; and

16 WHEREAS, the use of pharmacy services has increased dramatically during the COVID-19 public
17 health emergency; and

18 WHEREAS, Montana pharmacists graduate with a doctorate degree from the University of Montana
19 Skaggs School of Pharmacy with at least 6 years of education, some with additional education, residency, or
20 both, and training; and

21 WHEREAS, Montana pharmacists are trained to assess and optimize complex medication regimens to
22 ensure that they are appropriate, effective, safe, and can be taken as intended; and

23 WHEREAS, comprehensive medication management has been studied as an evidence-based process
24 of care; and

25 WHEREAS, there are over 1,200 pharmacists in Montana with numerous pharmacies in rural areas;
26 and

27 WHEREAS, pharmacists provide preventive care services by screening for tobacco use and chronic
28 conditions and by providing immunizations, and either provide services or refer to providers for care, as

1 appropriate; and

2 WHEREAS, research supports that pharmacists on the health care team improve medication-related
3 outcomes and reduce overall health care costs by focusing on optimizing medication use for people with
4 complex medication regimens; and

5 WHEREAS, the Montana Legislature has continued to seek changes to enhance access to health care
6 services; and

7 WHEREAS, pharmacists are not identified as health care providers in Montana statute, which limits
8 patient and provider access to their services.

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

12 That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee or statutory
13 committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, to undertake a comprehensive review of:

14 (1) options and services Montana pharmacy professionals can provide to improve access to health
15 care services across the state;

16 (2) the training and skills pharmacy professionals possess that will improve access and quality of
17 health care services in Montana; and

18 (3) obstacles in existing Montana laws and regulations hindering the expansion of pharmacy services.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study include input from appropriate stakeholders, including but
20 not limited to representatives of the Department of Public Health and Human Services, licensed pharmacists,
21 representatives of the University of Montana Skaggs School of Pharmacy, hospitals, federally qualified
22 community health centers, mental health providers, physicians, and clinical provider associations, organizations
23 that advocate for people with mental health and substance use disorders, and the Department of Veterans
24 Affairs.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the study is assigned to staff, any findings or conclusions be
26 presented to and reviewed by an appropriate committee designated by the Legislative Council.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review
28 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2022.

