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SENATE BILL NO. 485

INTRODUCED BY J. SMALL, T. MCGILLVRAY, P. FLOWERS, R. LYNCH, J. ELLSWORTH

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT RAISING THE HOURLY RATE OF LEGISLATOR  
COMPENSATION; AMENDING SECTION 5-2-301, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN APPLICABILITY DATE."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

**Section 1.** Section 5-2-301, MCA, is amended to read:

**"5-2-301. Compensation and expenses for members while in session.** (1) Legislators are entitled to a salary commensurate to that of the governor's current base salary multiplied by 40% and divided by 2080, which equals the per hour compensation for a legislator's daily rate ~~for an employee earning \$10.33 \$25 an hour~~ when the regular session of the legislature in which they serve is convened under 5-2-103 for those days during which the legislature is in session. The hourly rate must be adjusted by any statutorily required pay increase. The president of the senate and the speaker of the house must receive an additional \$5 a day in salary for those days during which the legislature is in session.

(2) Legislators may serve for no salary.

(3) Subject to subsection (4), legislators are entitled to a daily allowance, 7 days a week, during a legislative session, as reimbursement for expenses incurred in attending a session. Expense payments must stop when the legislature recesses for more than 3 days and resume when the legislature reconvenes.

(4) After November 15, and prior to December 15 of each even-numbered year, the department of administration shall conduct a survey of the allowance for daily expenses of legislators for the states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Idaho. The department shall include the average daily expense allowance for Montana legislators in determining the average daily rate for legislators. The department shall include only states with specific daily allowances in the calculation of the average. If the average daily rate is greater than the daily rate for legislators in Montana, legislators are entitled to a new daily rate for those days during which the legislature is in session. The new daily rate is the daily rate for the prior legislative session, increased by the percentage rate increase as determined by the survey, a cost-of-living increase to reflect

1 inflation that is calculated pursuant to 2-15-122(5)(a), or 5%, whichever is less. The expense allowance is  
2 effective when the next regular session of the legislature in which the legislators serve is convened under 5-2-  
3 103.

4 (5) Legislators are entitled to a mileage allowance as provided in 2-18-503 for each mile of travel  
5 to the place of the holding of the session and to return to their place of residence at the conclusion of the  
6 session.

7 (6) In addition to the mileage allowance provided for in subsection (5), legislators, upon submittal  
8 of an appropriate claim for mileage reimbursement to the legislative services division, are entitled to:

9 (a) three additional round trips to their place of residence during each regular session; and

10 (b) additional round trips as authorized by the legislature during special session.

11 (7) Legislators are not entitled to any additional mileage allowance under subsection (5) for a  
12 special session if it is convened within 7 days of a regular session.

13 (8) The department of administration shall work with the legislative services division to offer  
14 options to legislators to receive their session salary provided for in subsection (1) over the 2-year legislative  
15 term or a portion of the term. The options must be offered to all legislators in order to assist legislators to  
16 manage their income over the term. The per diem allowance and mileage as provided in this section, salary  
17 during a special session as provided in 5-3-101, and the salary during the interim as provided for in 5-2-302  
18 may not be affected."

19  
20 **NEW SECTION. Section 2. Applicability.** [This act] applies to compensation for legislators who will  
21 serve in or after the 2025 legislative session.

22 - END -