

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 9

INTRODUCED BY B. GILLESPIE, J. ELLIS

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA ESTABLISHING THE FIRST WEEK IN APRIL AS MONTANA SOIL HEALTH WEEK AND THE FIRST WEDNESDAY IN APRIL AS SOIL HEALTH DAY.

WHEREAS, recognizing soil as an essential natural resource, and Montana's agricultural producers and professionals as playing a critical role in managing Montana's soil and water resources; and

WHEREAS, Montana is home to more than 27,000 agricultural producers who are reporting less farm-related income; and

WHEREAS, the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture defines soil health as the continued capacity of soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans; and

WHEREAS, the concept of soil health across the Montana landscape is not new, but is only recently recognized as needed to prevent soil degradation and the degradation of soil can be rapid, while the formation and regeneration processes can be very slow; and

WHEREAS, as of 2007, an average of 6.4 tons of topsoil per acre were lost every year due to erosion in Montana, compromising the productivity of agriculture in the state; and

WHEREAS, agriculture is Montana's top industry, generating more than \$3.7 billion in services and products to the state's economy; and

WHEREAS, Montana's fish, wildlife, and diverse ecosystem generate almost \$4 billion a year to Montana's economy and provide one-ninth of the total jobs that are dependent on soil health; and

WHEREAS, healthy soil increases nutrient availability and helps capture, retain, and store more water, increasing the economic viability of farms and ranches, the availability of water for municipalities and recreational uses, and in-stream flows for power generation; and

WHEREAS, as soil organic carbon increases, so does its water holding capacity, increasing agriculture's resilience to drought and water shortages; and

Amendment - 1st Reading/2nd House-blue - Requested by: Frank Smith - (H) Agriculture

68th Legislature - 2023

Drafter: Andria Hardin,

SJ0009.001.003

1
2 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
3 THE STATE OF MONTANA:

4 That the first week of April be designated as Montana Soil Health Week.

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Wednesday of the first week of April be designated as Soil
6 Health Day and that the people of Montana, the Montana Department of Agriculture, the Montana Department
7 of Natural Resources and Conservation, and the Montana Association of Conservation Districts are encouraged
8 to observe the day.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send copies of this resolution to the director
10 of the Department of Agriculture, the Office of the Governor, the director of the Department of Natural
11 Resources and Conservation, the director of the Montana Association of Conservation Districts, the
12 administrator of the Forestry Division of the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, each federally
13 recognized tribal government in Montana, and Montana's Congressional Delegation.

14
15 - END -