HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 19

INTRODUCED BY K. SULLIVAN

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF PUMPED STORAGE HYDROPOWER; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BY REPORTED TO THE 69TH LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, the state's energy portfolio is adding renewable wind and solar power and may benefit from the development of viable energy storage resources that balance the variability of generation assets; and

WHEREAS, pumped storage hydropower provides viable energy storage by pumping water from a lower reservoir when excess energy generation is available and later releasing water to a lower reservoir through generating turbines when additional generation is needed; and

WHEREAS, pumped storage hydropower can mitigate load variations on the power grid, thereby balancing renewable generations assets and reducing the need for peaking power stations; and

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Department of Energy, pumped storage hydropower is the largest-capacity form of grid energy storage available, and the state has many viable locations for sighting facilities; and

WHEREAS, the state may stand to gain significant economic and energy security benefits from developing pumped storage hydropower.

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 examine the feasibility of pumped storage hydropower in the state in order to:

(1) evaluate regulations that need revising to enable the construction and operation of pumped storage hydropower;

(2) find any barriers to pumped storage hydropower development that may be addressed with

public policy;

(3) examine locational criteria for pumped storage hydropower, including:

(a) the elevation changes needed between upper and lower impoundment locations;

(b) the maximum distance required between upper and lower impoundment locations;

(c) the required proximity of transmission resources;

(d) the availability of water for initial system fill and subsequent replenishment for evaporation and seepage; and

(e) any other factors considered relevant to pumped storage hydropower;

(4) evaluate the potential for deferred release of water from existing hydroelectric facilities to mimic pumped storage hydropower in grid balancing services; and

(5) determine whether public sector financing or investment is appropriate or practical to encourage pumped storage hydropower development in the state.

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, 2024.

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 69th Legislature.

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