

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 10

INTRODUCED BY M. CUFFE

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA EXPRESSING SUPPORT OF HYDROPOWER AND THE FEDERAL COLUMBIA RIVER POWER SYSTEM; AND OPPOSING THE BREACH OF THE LOWER SNAKE RIVER DAMS.

WHEREAS, organizations throughout the Northwest have made proposals to breach the lower Snake River dams; and

WHEREAS, hydropower is a premier renewable resource that provides reliable, cost-effective, carbon-free electricity; and

WHEREAS, hydropower plays a critical role as our nation works to maintain an affordable, reliable, and resilient grid, which is an important cornerstone of our domestic energy system; and

WHEREAS, hydropower has become increasingly important to the grid as policies are adopted to increase electrification of other sectors of the economy, such as transportation and heating; and

WHEREAS, hydroelectric generation is unique in its ability to instantly increase or decrease generation to balance generation and electric demand; and

WHEREAS, hydropower provides a foundation for reliability that is necessary with decreasing levels of baseload power and firm dispatchable power and with increasing levels of variable nondispatchable renewable resources, such as wind and solar; and

WHEREAS, the recently concluded Columbia River System Operation environmental impact statement studied the environmental, biological, power supply, and socioeconomic impacts of the entire Federal Columbia River Power System, which is marketed by the Bonneville Power Administration. This multiyear, \$50.4 million analysis concluded the lower Snake River dams play a critical role in the Northwest power system and economy and their impact on salmon populations has been mitigated successfully through extensive fish and wildlife programs funded by regional ratepayers; and

WHEREAS, on an annual basis, the dams on the lower Snake River provide an average of 1,000 megawatts of electricity, enough to serve over 800,000 Northwest businesses, industries, and households,

1 including in western Montana; and

2 WHEREAS, the continued operation of the lower Snake River dams is central to reliably meeting the
3 region's clean energy goals, providing dispatchable capacity to prevent blackouts, and ramping capability to
4 integrate other renewable resources; and

5 WHEREAS, the lower Snake River dams can provide over 2,600 megawatts of sustained peaking
6 capacity that represents a quarter of the Federal Columbia River Power System's reserves holding capacity;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, with weather events like ice storms and extreme cold and heat waves, the lower Snake
9 River dams have also proved to be critical to maintaining electric grid reliability and public safety; and

10 WHEREAS, breaching the lower Snake River dams and replacing them with other non-emitting
11 resources could raise Bonneville Power Agency's power supply rates by up to 50%. For most utilities relying on
12 the agency, that translates to a 25% rate increase for their customers; and

13 WHEREAS, the lower Snake River dams contribute to the region's economy by providing irrigation,
14 recreation, employment, and inland waterway transportation; and

15 WHEREAS, if successful in breaching the lower Snake River dams, Montana's federally owned dams
16 and others in the Northwest that produce carbon-free, affordable power could be targeted for breaching; and

17 WHEREAS, breaching the lower Snake River dams or Montana's federally owned hydropower-
18 producing dams, including Hungry Horse Dam, Libby Dam, Yellowtail Dam, Canyon Ferry Dam, and Fort Peck
19 Dam, would greatly increase the risk of blackouts and raise power costs for electric cooperative members in
20 Montana and public power across the Northwest.

21
22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
23 THE STATE OF MONTANA:

24 That the Montana Legislature hereby stands opposed to the breaching of any of the federally owned
25 hydropower-producing dams, especially those on the lower Snake River, in the Northwest, and in the State of
26 Montana.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send copies of this resolution to the
28 governors and congressional delegations of all states served by the Bonneville Power Administration, including

1 California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming, and to the leaders of the United
2 States House of Representatives and the United States Senate.

3 - END -