

## 1 HOUSE BILL NO. 453

2 INTRODUCED BY D. COFFIN

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4 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT SUBMITTING TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF MONTANA AN  
5 AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE X, SECTION 1, OF THE MONTANA CONSTITUTION REQUIRING THE  
6 LEGISLATURE TO PROVIDE FOR A HIGH-QUALITY, AFFORDABLE, AND ACCESSIBLE UNIVERSITY  
7 SYSTEM AND TO PROVIDE FOR A SCHOLARSHIP FUND FOR CERTAIN PURPOSES; REQUIRING THE  
8 BOARD OF REGENTS TO ESTABLISH CERTAIN STANDARDS AND TO REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE;  
9 AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

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

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13 **Section 1.** Article X, section 1, of The Constitution of the State of Montana is amended to read:

14 **"Section 1. Educational goals and duties.** (1) It is the goal of the people to establish a system of  
15 education which will develop the full educational potential of each person. Equality of educational opportunity is  
16 guaranteed to each person of the state.

17 (2) The state recognizes the distinct and unique cultural heritage of the American Indians and is  
18 committed in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural integrity.

19 (3) The legislature shall provide a basic system of free quality public elementary and secondary schools.  
20 The legislature may provide such other educational institutions, public libraries, and educational programs as it  
21 deems desirable. It shall fund and distribute in an equitable manner to the school districts the state's share of the  
22 cost of the basic elementary and secondary school system.

23 (4) (a) The legislature shall provide for a high-quality, affordable, and accessible public university system  
24 that is nationally competitive, with commensurate funding to both ensure that the opportunity for each student to  
25 develop the student's full potential through higher education is available and to advance the frontiers of  
26 knowledge through faculty research and scholarship. The legislature shall provide for a Montana state higher  
27 education financial aid system that makes funds available for each full-time matriculated student in good standing.  
28 A portion of the funds shall be used to support faculty-student scholarly projects, including research and creative  
29 activities.

30 (b) The board of regents shall use comparisons to national norms, averages, and standards to define

1 and establish Montana standards for affordability, accessibility, and quality and a nationally competitive university  
 2 system.

3 (c) The board of regents shall annually provide the legislature with an assessment of the Montana  
 4 university system's conformance with the provisions of subsection (4) and, if any deficiencies are identified, shall  
 5 provide plans for remediation."

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 7 **NEW SECTION. Section 2. Two-thirds vote required.** Because [section 1] is a legislative proposal  
 8 to amend the constitution, Article XIV, section 8, of the Montana constitution requires an affirmative roll call vote  
 9 of two-thirds of all the members of the legislature, whether one or more bodies, for passage.

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 11 **NEW SECTION. Section 3. Effective date.** [This act] is effective upon approval by the electorate.

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 13 **NEW SECTION. Section 4. Submission to electorate.** [This act] shall be submitted to the qualified  
 14 electors of Montana at the general election to be held in November 2014 by printing on the ballot the full title of  
 15 [this act] and the following:

16  YES to amend Article X, section 1, of the Montana constitution to require the legislature to  
 17 provide for a high-quality, affordable, accessible, and nationally competitive public university  
 18 system and a financial aid system and to require the board of regents to use comparisons to  
 19 national standards in establishing certain Montana standards and provide an assessment of the  
 20 Montana university system's conformance with the standards.

21  NO to amend Article X, section 1, of the Montana constitution to require the legislature to provide  
 22 for a high-quality, affordable, accessible, and nationally competitive public university system and  
 23 a financial aid system and to require the board of regents to use comparisons to national  
 24 standards in establishing certain Montana standards and provide an assessment of the Montana  
 25 university system's conformance with the standards.

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