



AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TO PROVIDE MONEY TO LAKE COUNTY TO OFFSET COSTS IN THE BIENNIUM FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES ON THE FLATHEAD RESERVATION; CREATING A PUBLIC LAW 280 TASK FORCE TO PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS; PROHIBITING LAKE COUNTY FROM WITHDRAWING CONSENT TO BE SUBJECT TO CRIMINAL JURISDICTION OF THE STATE; ESTABLISHING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND A TERMINATION DATE.

WHEREAS, the State believes that the relationship between the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and Lake County has facilitated effective law enforcement and the administration of justice by subjecting all persons to jurisdiction of the State when felonies occur within the exterior boundaries of the county; and

WHEREAS, the State is concerned that the positive attributes of the relationship could be significantly harmed if either Lake County or the Tribe decide to withdraw from their consent to the state's exercise of criminal jurisdiction within the boundaries of the Flathead Reservation under Public Law 280; and

WHEREAS, although the State does not believe it has an obligation to fund law enforcement services in Lake County, it wishes to preserve the status quo between the effective date and the end of the biennium to determine whether the Tribe and Lake County wish to continue the relationship with their collective resources, but in the absence of ongoing appropriations in future bienniums from the State; and

WHEREAS, to preserve the status quo, the State is providing an appropriated amount for the biennium to Lake County.

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

Section 1. Recission of county resolution -- county resolution prohibition -- Public Law 280 task force -- recommendations. (1) The Lake County commissioners:

- (a) shall rescind and vacate resolution no. 22-42(a), adopted on January 3, 2023; and
- (b) may not adopt any further resolutions withdrawing consent to be subject to the criminal jurisdiction of the state during the biennium beginning July 1, 2023.

(2) There is established a Public Law 280 task force to serve in an advisory capacity to evaluate the current efficacy of Public Law 280 jurisdiction on the Flathead Indian reservation, associated costs, and the funding mechanisms for those costs. The task force is allocated to the department of justice for staffing services and administrative purposes only.

(3) The Public Law 280 task force, including the presiding officer, must be appointed by the governor and must include but is not limited to:

- (a) a representative of the governor;
- (b) the presiding officer of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes or the presiding officer's designated representative;
- (c) the presiding officer of the Lake County board of commissioners; and
- (d) a representative of the attorney general.

(4) The Public Law 280 task force shall prepare and publish a report that includes recommendations to the governor and the legislature regarding the findings of the task force on or before July 1, 2024.

Section 2. Appropriation. There is appropriated \$2.5 million from the general fund to the department of justice for each year in the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, to reimburse Lake County for law enforcement activities on the Flathead Indian reservation related to implementation of Public Law 280.

Section 3. Effective date. [This act] is effective July 1, 2023.

Section 4. Termination. [Sections 1 and 2] terminate June 30, 2025.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
HB 479, originated in the House.

Chief Clerk of the House

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2023.

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2023.

HOUSE BILL NO. 479

INTRODUCED BY J. READ, B. KEENAN

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