

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 2

INTRODUCED BY F. SMITH

BY REQUEST OF THE STATE-TRIBAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF OPTIONS TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF YOUTH WHO RUN AWAY FROM HOME.

WHEREAS, the Department of Justice reports that 68 Montana youth were reported missing three or more times in 2017 with one youth reported missing 18 times in that year; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Justice reports that 543 Montana youth were reported missing three or more times between 2013 and 2017 with one youth reported missing 26 times during that period; and

WHEREAS, 28% of the youth reported missing multiple times in 2017 were American Indian; and

WHEREAS, 22% of the youth reported missing multiple times in 2017 were in foster care some or all of the times they were reported missing (19% were in state custody and 2% were in tribal custody); and

WHEREAS, the Department of Justice and the State-Tribal Relations Committee recommend developing methods to intervene with youth who run away to determine why they ran away and assist with underlying problems in order to break the runaway cycle, which drains school, law enforcement, youth court, and other resources.

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, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, to study the reasons why youth repeatedly run away, including any reasons related to mental health, and the services or interventions, including wrap-around and community-based programs, that could help to break that cycle.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee examine the economic impacts of youth who run away, including costs to schools, law enforcement, the judicial system, and the social services system.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2020.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,  
2 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 67th Legislature.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to each tribal government located  
4 on the seven Montana reservations and to the Little Shell Chippewa tribe.

5 - END -