

1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 20

2 INTRODUCED BY WEBB, CAFERRO

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4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
5 MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE AND THE EFFECTS OF
6 THE ABUSE ON MONTANANS.

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8 WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that prescription drug abuse is the
9 fastest-growing problem in the United States; and

10 WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that approximately 29,000 Americans
11 died from unintentional drug overdoses in 2007 and the increase in unintentional deaths is due to increased use
12 of opioid analgesics, which since 2003 have been responsible for more deaths than heroin and cocaine
13 combined; and

14 WHEREAS, Montana Department of Justice statistics show that prescription drug abuse contributed to
15 the deaths of more than 300 Montanans in 2008, outpacing motor vehicle crashes, homicides, methamphetamine,
16 heroin, and cocaine deaths in Montana combined; and

17 WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that prescription drug abuse and
18 overdose deaths are highest among men, persons who are between the ages of 19 and 65, non-Hispanic white
19 people, and poor and rural populations; and

20 WHEREAS, surveys have shown that the 9 million people who reported long-term medical use of opioids
21 and the 5 million people who reported nonmedical use within a month of being surveyed are at the highest risk
22 of prescription drug overdoses; and

23 WHEREAS, managed effectively, prescription drugs can provide effective relief for individuals with
24 chronic pain; and

25 WHEREAS, 10% of Montana teens surveyed for the 2010 Montana Prevention Needs Assessment
26 reported using prescription pain relievers at some point in their lives; and

27 WHEREAS, national data suggests that rural teens are more likely than urban teens to abuse prescription
28 drugs; and

29 WHEREAS, 51% of teens in a national survey said they believe teens can obtain prescription drugs from
30 the family medicine cabinet; and

1 WHEREAS, a 2011 study estimated that the total cost in the United States of nonmedical use of
2 prescription opioids was \$53.4 billion, of which \$42 billion was attributable to lost productivity, \$8.2 billion to
3 criminal justice costs, \$2.2 billion to drug abuse treatment, and \$944 million to medical complications.

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5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
6 STATE OF MONTANA:

7 That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee, pursuant to
8 section 5-5-217, MCA, to study strategies for reducing prescription drug abuse, particularly the use of opioid pain
9 relievers for the treatment of chronic pain caused by conditions other than cancer or the treatment of cancer.

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study efforts include:

11 (1) compiling data on the major illicit sources of prescription drugs by using information from available
12 sources, including the Montana prescription drug registry;

13 (2) evaluating the extent and impact of current efforts in Montana to prevent prescription drug abuse and
14 to mitigate the effects of the abuse;

15 (3) identifying a comprehensive and coordinated statewide strategy that restricts access to prescription
16 drugs for illicit use while ensuring access for individuals who have legitimate need for the drugs;

17 (4) identifying opportunities for collaboration among the public health, law enforcement, and medical
18 communities at the state and local levels;

19 (5) identifying the communities most in need of prevention and mitigation efforts related to prescription
20 drug abuse in order to prevent abuse and addiction and prevent or reduce the related need for chemical
21 dependency treatment and the potential for an individual's involvement in the criminal justice system; and

22 (6) identifying appropriate steps that Montana policymakers may take to reduce prescription drug abuse
23 in order to improve the health of Montanans.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study include representatives of the Department of Public Health
25 and Human Services, the Department of Justice, the Board of Pharmacy, the Board of Medical Examiners, health
26 care providers, and other parties interested in efforts to prevent prescription drug abuse.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review
28 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2014.

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,
30 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 64th Legislature.

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