

## 1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 22

2 INTRODUCED BY A. OLSEN

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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 ON WAYS TO IMPROVE PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION  
6 SERVICE AND PUBLIC TRANSIT IN MONTANA; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE  
7 STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 69TH LEGISLATURE.  
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9 WHEREAS, passenger rail, passenger air, public transit, and passenger bus services provide mobility  
10 for senior citizens, persons with disabilities, students, tourists, and businesspeople; and

11 WHEREAS, some communities in the state are poorly served by public transportation, and options for  
12 passenger transportation services in the state continue to decline; and

13 WHEREAS, if state services are unavailable, many Montanans need local, tribal, or county  
14 transportation services for help getting to appointments for medical or other physical needs; and

15 WHEREAS, Amtrak's North Coast Hiawatha ceased operation through southern Montana in 1979, and  
16 transportation to and from the major population centers of southern Montana would be greatly enhanced by  
17 passenger rail service; and

18 WHEREAS, additional passenger transportation services will increase passenger transportation-related  
19 employment because of the need for upgraded infrastructure and operating personnel; and

20 WHEREAS, tourism is the state's second-largest industry and would be enhanced by improved  
21 passenger transportation services and public transit; and

22 WHEREAS, the Empire Builder is one of the most popular long-distance passenger trains in the United  
23 States, and it is greatly needed for the citizens of Montana's Hi-Line who have limited public transportation  
24 options, but it is challenged by a lack of rail capacity that results in frequent delays; and

25 WHEREAS, there is currently no board or commission within the state that is charged with the sole  
26 responsibility of overseeing and advocating for passenger transportation services, including passenger rail,  
27 passenger air, public transit, and passenger bus services; and

28 WHEREAS, autonomous vehicles may provide one option for transportation needs in the state in the

1 future, and more studies are needed to determine whether laws need to be changed to accommodate  
2 autonomous vehicles and whether policies are necessary to address safety, licensing, and other issues of  
3 public concern.

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

7 That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee or statutory  
8 committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to investigate ways to improve  
9 passenger transportation and public transit services in the state, including but not limited to the establishment of  
10 a passenger transportation commission and a review of laws that may need changing to allow the use of  
11 autonomous vehicles and provide for public safety.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the study is assigned to staff, any findings or conclusions be  
13 presented to and reviewed by an appropriate committee designated by the Legislative Council.

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review  
15 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2024.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,  
17 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 69th Legislature.

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