

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5

INTRODUCED BY M. PHILLIPS

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A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY TO INVESTIGATE THREATS TO THE MINING AND BURNING OF COAL IN MONTANA AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS IN COAL MINING AND USAGE.

WHEREAS, the mining and burning of coal in Montana is a significant part of Montana's economy and is a significant fiscal resource for the Legislature; and

WHEREAS, Montana's lawmakers decades ago formulated a plan intended to ensure continuing benefits to the people of the state by taxing coal to finance impact mitigation assistance, to help pay the current expenses of state and local government, and to accumulate a permanent trust to partially replicate the value of coal; and

WHEREAS, the federal government is developing national programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and these programs will require individual state responsibility in certain areas; and

WHEREAS, the burning of coal is a significant source of carbon dioxide, an important greenhouse gas; and

WHEREAS, regulation of greenhouse gas emissions may significantly impact the economic well-being and environment of Montana; and

WHEREAS, to plan for the future of Montana, residents need to better understand the economic and ecological effects of reducing or eliminating the mining and burning of coal, if threats to one or both become manifest.

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, or direct sufficient staff resources to:

- (1) investigate threats to the mining and burning of coal;
- (2) investigate the consequences of significant reductions in the mining and burning of coal, if threats to one or both become manifest, to:



- 1 (a) local, regional, and statewide economic sectors, including the impacts to existing contracts for the
2 mining or burning of coal;
- 3 (b) Montana's existing electrical generation; and
- 4 (c) Montana's environment;
- 5 (3) assess the potential use of alternative energy resources in Montana to replace the use of coal-fired
6 generation, accounting for the economic and ecological impacts;
- 7 (4) outline measures to minimize the economic impacts reducing or eliminating the mining or burning
8 of coal;
- 9 (5) assess the role of the coal severance tax in Montana's future, ~~and~~ the financial ramifications of
10 reducing coal mining in Montana, AND THE POTENTIAL FOR OTHER ECONOMIC SECTORS TO COMPENSATE FOR ANY
11 REDUCTION IN THE COAL SEVERANCE TAX DUE TO REDUCED COAL MINING IN MONTANA;
- 12 (6) assess Montana's overall economic competitiveness in a carbon dioxide-constrained world; and
- 13 (7) assess the likelihood that the mining or burning of coal will increase given threats identified in
14 subsection (1).

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

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review
18 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2018.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,
20 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 66th Legislature.

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