

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 6

INTRODUCED BY E. HILL SMITH

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM LEGISLATIVE STUDY OF METHAMPHETAMINE USE IN MONTANA.

WHEREAS, law enforcement agencies are reporting an increase in the number of arrests involving methamphetamine, with the state Division of Criminal Investigation reporting that it handled 232 methamphetamine cases in 2015, compared with 68 in 2010; and

WHEREAS, the increased use of methamphetamine in Montana is leading to corresponding increases in law enforcement investigations, district court caseloads, jail and prison populations, and foster care placements, as well as a growing need for treatment services; and

WHEREAS, the number of child abuse and neglect cases filed in district courts across Montana increased from 1,006 in 2009 to 2,433 in 2016, with officials attributing much of the increase to methamphetamine use by parents; and

WHEREAS, the Protect Montana Kids Commission report to the Governor in May 2016 noted that more than 1,000 of the 3,000 children in foster care in 2015 were placed in foster care because of methamphetamine use by their parents; and

WHEREAS, state and local agencies are struggling to deal with the increased demand for services due to methamphetamine use; and

WHEREAS, methamphetamine use has an unquantifiable effect on the physical, mental, and social well-being of not only methamphetamine users but also their family members.

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 review:

(1) the extent of methamphetamine use in Montana;

(2) the degree to which methamphetamine use has affected services provided by law enforcement, the judiciary, state and local government agencies, and programs that work with individuals involved with

1 methamphetamine use or family members impacted by use of the drug;

2 (3) the treatment available for methamphetamine use, including how the course of treatment and
3 availability of treatment affects an individual's ability to be reunified with children who have been removed from
4 the home; and

5 (4) the efforts being undertaken by law enforcement, the judiciary, and state and local governments to
6 reduce methamphetamine use and mitigate its impact on Montanans and on state and local government
7 agencies.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee develop recommendations for:

9 (1) reducing methamphetamine use, including prevention and treatment efforts;

10 (2) mitigating the impacts of methamphetamine use on Montanans and their families; and

11 (3) improving collaboration and cooperation among state and local government agencies in addressing
12 methamphetamine use and its impacts.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study include representatives of the Department of Public Health
14 and Human Services, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Justice, the Office of State Public
15 Defender, district court judges, county attorneys, local law enforcement agencies, local government, and drug
16 treatment programs and other entities that offer services to individuals involved with or impacted by the use of
17 methamphetamine.

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

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

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