



A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY TO IDENTIFY THE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES INVOLVED IN PROVIDING EMERGENCY CARE AND TO REPORT ON STRATEGIES THAT CAN STRENGTHEN MONTANA'S EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SYSTEM.

WHEREAS, the Montana Legislature recognizes the need for quality emergency medical services and an effective emergency care system that provides quality care and treatment for victims of sudden and serious injury or illness from first response through initial stabilization and subsequent emergency treatment; and

WHEREAS, emergency medical services are an integral part of the emergency care system and are particularly important in less densely populated areas where access to health care services is often limited; and

WHEREAS, many volunteer emergency medical personnel work full time in other, unrelated jobs within the community, donate their personal time to provide prehospital care, and are usually expected to be available 24 hours a day and on weekends and holidays; and

WHEREAS, the vital nature of emergency medical services and the state of constant readiness required to maintain adequate emergency services pose special challenges for rural communities, including but not limited to adequate funding; recruitment, retention, and training of volunteers and other personnel; physician leadership; and modern communications and medical services equipment.

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 study the availability and viability of acute care and emergency medical services across the state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee:

(1) gather information from stakeholders and customers of the state's emergency care system, including but not limited to local emergency services providers, emergency medical services systems, hospitals, physicians and other health care providers, elected county and local officials, organizations representing emergency medical services providers, and state agencies;

(2) conduct a statewide assessment of issues that communities face relating to emergency medical services;

(3) identify challenges to the continued viability of the state's emergency care system; and

(4) identify objectives and strategies that will help ensure the continued viability of the system.

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2008.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions, comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 61st Legislature.

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