

House JOINT RESOLUTION NO. *49*
 INTRODUCED BY *Tom Donnell-Forester*
~~Walter Hightower~~ *Southwest* *John W. Clark*

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 3
 4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF
 5 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN
 6 INTERIM STUDY OF THE FEASIBILITY OF EXTENDING THE REQUIRED
 7 SCHOOL YEAR FOR ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS; AND
 8 REQUIRING A REPORT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY TO THE 53RD
 9 LEGISLATURE.

10
 11 WHEREAS, the condition of elementary and high school
 12 public education, which has been debated as a crisis
 13 situation for the past decade, continues to worry educators
 14 and the public as evidence mounts that, overall, the
 15 nation's students consistently test lower than their
 16 counterparts in many European and Asian countries, such as
 17 Germany and Japan; and

18 WHEREAS, the competitive edge of the United States is
 19 dulled by the fact that the nation's students fail to
 20 achieve the levels of excellence in math and science that
 21 are achieved by many foreign students; and

22 WHEREAS, in Montana and other states, educational
 23 achievement is increasingly perceived as the most critical
 24 building block of a quality future for a state's citizens;
 25 and

1 WHEREAS, the educational strategies devised to address
 2 the perceived crisis in public education have not emphasized
 3 lengthening the student's time in the educational setting;
 4 and

5 WHEREAS, the required minimum of 180 pupil-instruction
 6 days in a school year has prevailed in Montana and most of
 7 the nation, while other countries with students who
 8 consistently score higher than our students have minimum
 9 school years of 190, 220, or even 240 days; and

10 WHEREAS, while Montana students compare favorably with
 11 students around the nation in attainment of basic skills, as
 12 testimony to the state's commitment to quality schools,
 13 Montana students may be able to attain greater proficiencies
 14 with a longer school year; and

15 WHEREAS, extension of the school year for Montana's
 16 elementary and high school students presents a fiscal
 17 challenge that should be fully examined because the benefits
 18 of improved educational results, maximized use of school
 19 facilities, and enhanced economic competitiveness may
 20 outweigh any increased costs to the state and to local
 21 school districts.

22
 23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE
 24 OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

25 That an appropriate interim committee be assigned to

LC 2055/01

1 study the costs and benefits of extending the elementary and
2 high school year from 180 days to as many as 220 days.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Office of Public
4 Instruction, the Board of Public Education, and the various
5 education interest groups contribute to the goals of the
6 committee upon request.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee report the
8 findings of the study to the 53rd Legislature and, if
9 necessary, draft legislation to implement its
10 recommendations.

-End-

APPROVED BY COMM. ON EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

1 *House* JOINT RESOLUTION NO. *49*
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 3 *Wright Stephens Southworth D. W. W. Clark*
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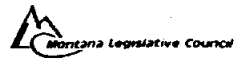
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INTRODUCED BY *Tom Duvell Forester*
Wright Stephens Southwest Dennis Clark

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WHEREAS, the condition of elementary and high school public education, which has been debated as a crisis situation for the past decade, continues to worry educators and the public as evidence mounts that, overall, the nation's students consistently test lower than their counterparts in many European and Asian countries, such as Germany and Japan; and

WHEREAS, the competitive edge of the United States is dulled by the fact that the nation's students fail to achieve the levels of excellence in math and science that are achieved by many foreign students; and

WHEREAS, in Montana and other states, educational achievement is increasingly perceived as the most critical building block of a quality future for a state's citizens; and

WHEREAS, the educational strategies devised to address the perceived crisis in public education have not emphasized lengthening the student's time in the educational setting; and

WHEREAS, the required minimum of 180 pupil-instruction days in a school year has prevailed in Montana and most of the nation, while other countries with students who consistently score higher than our students have minimum school years of 190, 220, or even 240 days; and

WHEREAS, while Montana students compare favorably with students around the nation in attainment of basic skills, as testimony to the state's commitment to quality schools, Montana students may be able to attain greater proficiencies with a longer school year; and

WHEREAS, extension of the school year for Montana's elementary and high school students presents a fiscal challenge that should be fully examined because the benefits of improved educational results, maximized use of school facilities, and enhanced economic competitiveness may outweigh any increased costs to the state and to local school districts.

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 3 WYATT, KILPATRICK, SOUTHWORTH, DAVIS,
 4 CLARK, COCCHIARELLA
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