

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 5

Introduced by Gage

12/28 Introduced
1/02 Referred to Local Government
1/04 First Reading
1/14 Hearing
1/20 Committee Report--Bill Passed as Amended
1/21 2nd Reading Passed
1/22 3rd Reading Passed

Transmitted to House
1/23 First Reading
1/23 Referred to Local Government
3/04 Hearing
3/04 Tabled in Committee

1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5

2 INTRODUCED BY GAGE

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 COUNTY CONSOLIDATION AND REORGANIZATION AND
7 CONSOLIDATION OF COUNTY OFFICES WITHIN A COUNTY AND BETWEEN
8 COUNTIES; AND REQUIRING A REPORT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE
9 STUDY TO THE 54TH LEGISLATURE.

10
11 WHEREAS, the citizens of Montana recognize the economic
12 reality of limited financial resources within the state; and

13 WHEREAS, the taxpayers of Montana are supporting more
14 county governments than are needed for efficient management
15 of local affairs; and

16 WHEREAS, 28 Montana counties were formed between 1910
17 and 1925 without the benefit of a comprehensive plan; and

18 WHEREAS, Article XI, section 3, of the Montana
19 Constitution allows a county government to have as many as
20 13 elected officials; and

21 WHEREAS, many sparsely populated counties do not require
22 the number of elective positions allowed by the Montana
23 Constitution in order to maintain an adequate level of
24 services; and

25 WHEREAS, many counties lack the revenue to adequately

1 fund the number of county offices currently being
2 maintained; and

3 WHEREAS, the Legislature is uniquely qualified to
4 address the questions of county consolidation and county
5 office consolidation from a statewide perspective and to
6 determine what factors should be considered in developing a
7 statewide plan for consolidation and reorganization.

8
9 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE
10 OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

11 That an appropriate interim committee be assigned to
12 study:

13 (1) the consolidation and reorganization of counties,
14 taking into consideration the following factors:

- 15 (a) existing county boundaries;
16 (b) existing legislative districts;
17 (c) geographic features;
18 (d) transportation routes and market areas;
19 (e) social, economic, and natural resources;
20 (f) population distribution;
21 (g) taxable valuation; and
22 (h) other relevant factors; and

23 (2) the consolidation of county offices within and
24 between counties, taking into consideration the following
25 factors:

- 1 (a) current duties of county officers;
2 (b) statutory duties of county officers;
3 (c) qualifications for various county officers;
4 (d) existing levels of service within counties;
5 (e) financial support necessary to operate current
6 offices;
7 (f) available telecommunications technology; and
8 (g) other relevant factors.
- 9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee
10 report the findings of the study to the 54th Legislature and
11 present options for legislative consideration if the
12 committee determines that options are necessary.

-End-

APPROVED BY COMM.
ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5

INTRODUCED BY GAGE

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING CONSOLIDATION AND REORGANIZATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF COUNTY OFFICES WITHIN A COUNTY AND BETWEEN COUNTIES; AND REQUIRING A REPORT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY TO THE 54TH LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, the citizens of Montana recognize the economic reality of limited financial resources within the state; and

~~WHEREAS, the taxpayers of Montana are supporting more county governments than are needed for efficient management of local affairs; and~~

WHEREAS, 28 Montana counties were formed between 1910 and 1925 without the benefit of a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, Article XI, section 3, of the Montana Constitution allows a county government to have as many as 13 elected officials; and

WHEREAS, many sparsely populated counties do not require the number of elective positions allowed by the Montana Constitution in order to maintain an adequate level of services; and

WHEREAS, many counties lack the revenue to adequately

fund the number of county offices currently being maintained; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature is uniquely qualified to address the questions of county ~~consolidation-and-county office-consolidation~~ GOVERNMENT from a statewide perspective and to determine what factors should be considered in developing a statewide plan for consolidation and reorganization.

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

That an appropriate interim committee be assigned to study:

(1) the ~~consolidation-and-reorganization~~ ORGANIZATION of counties, taking into consideration the following factors:

- (a) existing county boundaries;
- (b) existing legislative districts;
- (c) geographic features;
- (d) transportation routes and market areas;
- (e) social, economic, and natural resources;
- (f) population distribution;
- (g) taxable valuation; and
- (h) other relevant factors; and

(2) the ~~consolidation~~ ORGANIZATION of county offices

1 ~~within--and--between-counties~~, taking into consideration the
2 following factors:

- 3 (a) current duties of county officers;
- 4 (b) statutory duties of county officers;
- 5 (c) qualifications for various county officers;
- 6 (d) existing levels of service within counties;
- 7 (e) financial support necessary to operate current
8 offices;
- 9 (f) available telecommunications technology; and
- 10 (g) other relevant factors; AND

11 (3) THE CONSOLIDATION AND REORGANIZATION OF COUNTIES
12 AND COUNTY OFFICES BASED ON THE FACTORS IN SUBSECTIONS (1)
13 AND (2).

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee
15 report the findings of the study to the 54th Legislature and
16 present options for legislative consideration if the
17 committee determines that options are necessary.

-End-

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5

INTRODUCED BY GAGE

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WHEREAS, the citizens of Montana recognize the economic reality of limited financial resources within the state; and

~~WHEREAS,--the--taxpayers--of--Montana--are--supporting--more county-governments--than--are--needed--for--efficient--management of--local--affairs;--and~~

WHEREAS, 28 Montana counties were formed between 1910 and 1925 without the benefit of a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, Article XI, section 3, of the Montana Constitution allows a county government to have as many as 13 elected officials; and

WHEREAS, many sparsely populated counties do not require the number of elective positions allowed by the Montana Constitution in order to maintain an adequate level of services; and

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11 (3) THE CONSOLIDATION AND REORGANIZATION OF COUNTIES
12 AND COUNTY OFFICES BASED ON THE FACTORS IN SUBSECTIONS (1)
13 AND (2).

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15 report the findings of the study to the 54th Legislature and
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17 committee determines that options are necessary.

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