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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 19  
INTRODUCED BY Carlovich

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF THE NEEDS OF MONTANA VETERANS; AND REQUIRING A REPORT OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY TO THE 55TH LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, Montana has the third highest per capita number of veterans in the United States; and

WHEREAS, 26%, or 26,291, of Montana's veterans are 65 years of age or older; and

WHEREAS, Montana currently provides a total of 175 beds for veterans who require nursing home care, which are insufficient to provide for the nursing care needs of Montana's veterans; and

WHEREAS, federal guidelines suggest that Montana needs between 255 and 408 state nursing home beds, and the guidelines provide that these beds can be built and operated with federal funding assistance from the federal Department of Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS, the state veterans' nursing home at Columbia Falls serves veterans in northwestern Montana, and the state veterans' nursing home at Miles City serves veterans in eastern Montana, leaving southwestern and central Montana unserved, and the area of Deer Lodge and Silver Bow Counties would provide an ideal location in which to establish a state veterans' nursing home that is accessible to veterans in the southwestern and central regions of Montana; and

WHEREAS, health care reform has stalled at the federal level, and incremental insurance-based reforms will not address all of the needs of Montana's veterans; and

WHEREAS, there may still be a significant effect on the health care of veterans because of impending changes at the national level regarding federal health care policy for veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Interim Subcommittee on Veterans' Needs created by the 1993 Legislature provided an important liaison between state government and veterans, and the continuation of a similar subcommittee would be of great service to Montana veterans.

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

That the Legislative Council designate an appropriate interim committee to continue to study the



1 needs of Montana veterans and that the study include:

2 (1) the feasibility of providing long-term nursing home care and home health care as it relates to  
3 Montana veterans and the role of the federal Department of Veterans Affairs and any changes in state or  
4 federal policy because of health care reform;

5 (2) a review of the extent of access, geographically and otherwise, of veterans to health and  
6 nursing home care within Montana; and

7 (3) the continuum of veterans' services available throughout the state and determination of the role  
8 and potential for additional federally funded veterans' programs in Montana.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee may request staff assistance and  
10 information from the Department of Military Affairs, the Veterans' Affairs Division, the Department of  
11 Corrections and Human Services, and other legislative or executive agencies that may have information  
12 relevant to veterans' affairs.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee report its findings, conclusions, and  
14 recommendations to the 55th Legislature.

15 -END-



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