

Revised

Brainard

House JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 21

INTRODUCED BY

Schultz
Carly Ream *B. Bamber* *W. P. Brown*
W. C. Craig *Denny*

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO STUDY METHODS OF CONTAINING THE RISING COST OF TUITION FOR IN-STATE STUDENTS; AND REQUESTING THE BOARD OF REGENTS TO REPORT ITS FINDINGS TO THE 55TH LEGISLATURE.

Coakley *John H. ...* *Salvin*

WHEREAS, Montana's system of higher education has provided numerous benefits to the citizens of Montana; and

WHEREAS, the educational needs of the world are becoming increasingly more complex and dependent on technological knowledge; and

WHEREAS, Montana's citizens will become increasingly more dependent on higher education programs in order to remain competitive in the job market of this changing world; and

WHEREAS, the cost of tuition for higher education in Montana has increased by 155% in real dollars over the last 10 years, while state support for higher education has decreased by 7% in real dollars; and

WHEREAS, students in higher education in Montana and their families are not only contributing to the tax increases necessary to support higher education, but students and their families are also paying the increased costs of tuition, resulting in a significantly larger contribution to higher education funding in this state than that of many other citizens; and

WHEREAS, an increasing percentage of the students in Montana's university system units are nontraditional students who have returned to school while attempting to maintain a job and a family; and

WHEREAS, due to the ever-escalating cost of in-state tuition, higher education is becoming less accessible to young people and nontraditional students in Montana, especially those with limited resources.

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

That the Board of Regents be requested to study the following issues:

- (1) limitation of future increases in tuition and fees;

- 1 (2) access to higher education for all economic segments of Montana's population; and
- 2 (3) methods of offsetting the increasing costs of tuition and fees for low- and middle-income
- 3 Montanans through scholarships, grants, and loans.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Regents report the findings of the study to the 55th
5 Legislature, including budget recommendations that include increases in state support commensurate with
6 tuition increases and commensurate with the needs of low- and middle-income Montanans and their ability
7 to gain access to higher education.

8 -END-

Revised

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