, SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 9 1 INTRODUCED BY 2 3 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF 4 5 MONTANA SUPPORTING THE GOVERNOR'S REQUEST FOR A HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM TO 6 CONTINUE AGGRESSIVE IMPROVEMENT OF HIGH PRIORITY MONTANA CORRIDORS. 7 8 WHEREAS, Governor Marc Racicot has endorsed continuation of the wholly state-funded 9 construction program in the 1996-97 biennium, and the Montana Department of Transportation, along with 10 the Montana Highway Commission, plans to aggressively improve high priority highway corridors, including 11 US 93, US 2, and MT 200, and other important Montana highways that link our cities, that connect our 12 mining, manufacturing, and agricultural production to national and international markets, that provide for personal mobility and increased safety, and that support Montana's economic competitiveness; and 13 14 WHEREAS, the Montana Highway Commission, which equitably represents all regions of the state, has statutory authority to set priorities and select highway construction projects on Montana's federal-aid 15 16 highways and state highways; and 17 WHEREAS, the Montana Legislature does not have the authority to order reconstruction of highways but desires to do as much as possible within its powers to stop the needlessly high accident and 18 19 death rate that numbered 27 Montanans in 1993-94 on Highway 93 alone; and 20 WHEREAS, the Montana Department of Transportation has identified needs of the statewide 21 highway system that exceed existing resources; and

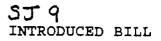
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WHEREAS, the 53rd Legislature increased the state fuel tax; and

23 WHEREAS, implicit in the fuel tax increase was the commitment to a wholly state-funded 24 construction program that includes funds to address the needs of Montana's secondary highway system 25 through the Save Our Secondaries (SOS) Program; and

26 WHEREAS, continued commitment to a wholly state-funded construction program will effectively 27 and equitably address many outstanding needs of Montana's primary and secondary highways and locally 28 owned bridges, minimize the state share needed to match federal-aid highway funds, and preserve 29 federal-aid transportation dollars for the more complex and costly construction projects needed on our 30 primary and national highway system roadways; and





54th Legislature

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WHEREAS, it takes an average of 3 to 5 years to develop highway projects for construction; and 1 2 WHEREAS, the schedule of the future construction program is severely disrupted by funding 3 fluctuations; and 4 WHEREAS, the 54th Legislature desires to maintain funding for the new High Priority Construction 5 Program; and 6 WHEREAS, if there are no new or additional diversions from the highway special revenue account 7 (state highway trust fund), projections indicate that there will be no need for an additional fuel tax increase 8 before the year 2006; and 9 WHEREAS, the 2006 financial plan provides for the repayment of debt incurred to complete Montana's interstate system, which is a high priority to the state as well as a stable funding level for 10 highway construction. 11 12 NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 13 14 STATE OF MONTANA: That the 54th Legislature demonstrate support and encouragement: 15 (1) to join Governor Racicot and support continuation of the wholly state-funded construction 16 17 program at the \$30 million level in fiscal year 1996 and at a level of \$35 million in each succeeding year 18 until the year 2006; 19 (2) to reject any new or additional diversions from the highway special revenue account (state 20 highways trust fund); 21 (3) to support putting the trust back into the highway trust fund by working to cleanse the trust 22 fund of existing diversions; and 23 (4) to work to avoid highway funding fluctuations that seriously disrupt the delivery of the planned 24 construction program. 25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Department of Transportation be urged to aggressively pursue 26 implementation of the future construction program with due diligence to improve the safety and welfare 27 of our citizens. 28 -END-



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