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House JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 11

INTRODUCED BY \_\_\_\_\_

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING, COMPACTING, OR DELEGATING TO INDIAN TRIBES MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY FOR THE NATIONAL BISON RANGE AND OTHER PROGRAMS NOT ESTABLISHED SPECIFICALLY FOR AMERICAN INDIANS.

WHEREAS, many federal government programs and activities have been established for the benefit of all Americans, including residents of the state of Montana, and not specifically for the benefit of American Indians; and

WHEREAS, the National Bison Range near Moiese and its ancillary management areas have been purchased by the federal government and have been managed on behalf of and through the support of all American taxpayers since 1908; and

WHEREAS, the National Bison Range is an example of a federal program established for the benefit of all Americans; and

WHEREAS, the Montana Legislature is aware that negotiations have been occurring between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation concerning the compacting to the tribes for management of the National Bison Range and ancillary management areas, which is a non-American Indian federal program; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has done an excellent job of managing the National Bison Range and its ancillary areas over the years for the benefit of all Montanans and all other Americans as evidenced by the support shown in 1995 through approximately 4,000 signatures by residents of Montana and several other states and by a University of Idaho survey in that same year indicating that 91% of visitors from throughout the United States and the world rated the area and their visit there good to excellent; and

WHEREAS, the federal Indian Self-Determination Act and its 1994 amendments were not intended as cost-saving measures, and compacting with the tribes would cost as much as, and likely more than, current operations; and

WHEREAS, the federal government's contracting, compacting, or delegating authority to American

1 Indian tribes for non-American Indian programs like the bison range would serve no useful purpose to the  
2 citizens of Montana or the United States.

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

6 That the Montana Legislature advises the federal government of its opposition to federal  
7 contracting, compacting, or otherwise delegating authority to American Indian tribes for federal programs  
8 that were not established specifically for the benefit of American Indians.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana Legislature desires that programs not established  
10 specifically for American Indians, such as the National Bison Range, continue under the sole management  
11 of the appropriate federal agency for the benefit of all Americans.

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