



A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF ELECTRIC POWER RESERVES; IDENTIFYING OPTIONS TO SECURE RESERVE POWER ABOVE PEAK LOADS; AND TO CONSIDER REQUIRING WHOLESALE ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION CUSTOMERS OR THEIR SUPPLIERS TO CONTRACT FOR OR PROVIDE ELECTRIC POWER RESERVES TO ENSURE ELECTRIC POWER SYSTEM RELIABILITY.

WHEREAS, economic, policy, and technological forces are rapidly transforming the supply and demand of electricity on the Montana grid; and

WHEREAS, a study of electric resource adequacy in the state by the University of Montana Bureau of Business and Economic Research projected the state may be a net importer of electricity within 5 to 10 years, increasing reliance on transmission paths into the state; and

WHEREAS, many transmission pathways into the state show signs of being congested; and

WHEREAS, an extreme cold weather event in February 2021 created a situation in which the delivery of electricity supply to a wholesale customer of an investor-owned utility was interrupted and the utility was nearly unable to meet its electricity delivery obligations to other customers, including electric cooperatives; and

WHEREAS, the event could have led to rolling blackouts in the state during that time; and

WHEREAS, new solutions should be considered to enhance reliability and minimize the probability of service interruption; and

WHEREAS, solutions evaluated should include increased pledges of electricity supply reserves above peak demand that a balancing authority could summon to improve the tools utilities have to manage loads during critical periods.

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

THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee or statutory committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to:

- (1) determine whether to require utilities and wholesale electric generation suppliers to have, contract for, or participate in a pool for electric power generation reserves;
- (2) determine when reserves should be made available to the balancing authority managing an electric load in order to decrease the probability of service interruptions and enhance reliability while remaining in compliance with evolving North American Electric Reliability Corporation standards; and
- (3) examine the feasibility and efficacy of providing an alternative option to wholesale electric transmission customers to enable temporary reductions to a portion or all electric load instead of contracting additional electric generation reserves at times when load-shedding is required by the balancing authority to ensure uninterrupted service to ratepayers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the study is assigned to staff, any findings or conclusions be presented to and reviewed by an appropriate committee designated by the Legislative Council.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2024.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions, comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 69th Legislature.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
HJ 6, originated in the House.

Chief Clerk of the House

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2023.

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2023.

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 6

INTRODUCED BY K. ZOLNIKOV

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