HOUSE BILL NO. 403

INTRODUCED BY D. HAWK, S. NOVAK, M. LEE, J. SECKINGER, S. FYANT, E. BUTTREY, R. MARSHALL, D. HARVEY, S. VINTON, C. GLIMM, G. OBLANDER, F. NAVE, B. USHER, B. BARKER, J. COHENOUR, S. HOWELL, J. KARLEN, D. LENZ, T. MCGILLVRAY, B. BEARD, S. DEMAROIS, J. LYNCH

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REQUIRING THE MONTANA STATE HOSPITAL TO GRANT ACCESS TO A LEGISLATOR."

WHEREAS, the Montana State Hospital lost its federal certification from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in 2022 due to several patient health-related and safety-related factors, including a substantial number of deaths and falls; and

WHEREAS, many patients of Montana State Hospital live with traumatic brain injury, dementia, and other cognitive challenges that impede their ability to advocate for themselves; and

WHEREAS, legislators are called on by their constituents to advocate for and intervene on behalf of all Montanans, but especially those who are vulnerable.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Legislative access.** (1) A legislator must have immediate, unlimited access at all times to the Montana state hospital.

(2) A legislator seeking access to the Montana state hospital is subject to routine security and safety procedures of the facility or program.

(3) While in the Montana state hospital, a legislator shall prioritize and respect the health, dignity, privacy, and welfare of Montana state hospital patients.

NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an integral part of Title 53, chapter 21, part 6, and the provisions of Title 53, chapter 21, part 6, apply to [section 1].

- END -