

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 28

INTRODUCED BY J. WINDY BOY

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A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING A STUDY OF THE ECONOMIC IMPACTS AND FINANCING OF TRIBAL COLLEGES.

WHEREAS, Montana has seven tribal colleges, the most of any state, and these colleges serve over 5,000 Indian and non-Indian students; and

WHEREAS, Montana tribal colleges make significant contributions to economic development in rural areas of Montana that struggle economically; and

WHEREAS, the positive economic impacts of tribal colleges are generally accepted, but have never been studied or quantified; and

WHEREAS, the state supports Montana tribal colleges through partial reimbursements for the costs of educating resident nonbeneficiary students; and

WHEREAS, this reimbursement mechanism is largely misunderstood by policymakers, provides an unpredictable revenue source for the tribal colleges, and is not consistent with the mechanism for providing state support for Montana community colleges or units of the university system; and

WHEREAS, a study of the economic impacts and financing of tribal colleges will help inform the Legislature's future policymaking, ensure maximizing the economic benefits of state investment in tribal colleges, and demonstrate Montana's constitutional commitment to preserving the cultural integrity of American Indians.

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, pursuant to 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to:

- (1) investigate the economic impacts of tribal colleges on the local, regional, and state economy, including:
 - (a) wages;
 - (b) employment rates;



- 1 (c) domestic product;
- 2 (d) spending; and
- 3 (e) local and state tax revenue; and
- 4 (2) study the financing of Montana tribal colleges, including:
- 5 (a) federal contributions;
- 6 (b) state contributions;
- 7 (c) tuition;
- 8 (d) a comparison of state support for tribal colleges, community colleges, and units of the Montana
- 9 university system; and
- 10 (e) a review of how other states provide support for tribal colleges.
- 11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review
- 12 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2016.
- 13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,
- 14 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 65th Legislature.
- 15 - END -