

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 16

2 INTRODUCED BY G. NIKOLAKAKOS, W. GALT, J. KASSMIER

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4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
5 MONTANA HIGHLIGHTING THE STATE'S RENEWABLE ENERGY JOBS, CURRENT ECONOMIC
6 INVESTMENTS, AND POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.

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8 WHEREAS, energy costs in Montana are among the highest in the nation, with Montanans facing the
9 fourth-highest energy costs nationwide, further straining residents and driving industry away; and

10 WHEREAS, renewable energy investments provide a critical opportunity to address rising energy costs,
11 as wind and solar are cost-effective energy sources for power generation, and their costs continue to decline;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, energy demand and reliability concerns in the west are growing rapidly, creating an
14 opportunity for additional renewable energy resources to address these needs on the electric grid; and

15 WHEREAS, Montana has substantial renewable energy potential, ranking second in the nation for wind
16 energy potential and fourth for solar energy potential, yet it currently ranks only 20th for installed wind capacity
17 and 42nd for installed solar capacity according to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the United States
18 Department of Energy, and the Solar Energy Industries Association; and

19 WHEREAS, the development of renewable energy infrastructure in Montana offers significant economic
20 benefits, including the projected creation of approximately 20,000 new jobs, largely for construction, and 39%
21 net job growth in Montana's energy sector, according to the Clean Energy Transition Institute; and

22 WHEREAS, renewable energy projects are particularly beneficial to Montanans when they prioritize the
23 use of skilled Montana-based labor and provide family-sustaining wages and benefits; and

24 WHEREAS, renewable energy investments have generated substantial tax revenue for Montana, with
25 state and local governments collecting \$143 million from wind and solar projects between 2006 and 2024, and
26 projects contributing over 7.5% of total property taxes paid in counties with renewable energy projects in 2024;
27 and

28 WHEREAS, significant private investment in renewable energy development is already occurring in

1 Montana, representing a model for further economic development; and

2 WHEREAS, advances in battery storage technology and falling costs have enhanced the reliability of
3 renewable energy resources when the technologies are paired, making it feasible to integrate large-scale
4 renewable projects into Montana's electric grid while improving energy resilience and affordability.

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

8 That the Legislature recognizes the tremendous economic benefits that renewable energy projects
9 have brought into the state and further recognizes the potential for future economic benefits from new
10 renewable energy projects. As such, the Legislature supports the future responsible development of renewable
11 energy projects in Montana.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to the Governor of Montana,
13 members of the Montana Public Service Commission, the Montana Rural Electric Cooperatives' Association,
14 and members of the Montana Congressional Delegation.

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