

## 1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 65

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4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF  
5 MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE IN MONTANA; AND  
6 REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 70TH LEGISLATURE.

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8 WHEREAS, Montana law prohibits individuals from driving under the influence (DUI) of alcohol or  
9 drugs; and

10 WHEREAS, Montana has the highest DUI rate in the country and was ranked as the worst state for  
11 drunk driving, according to a study released by Forbes in January 2025; and

12 WHEREAS, Montana saw a statewide average of approximately 7,300 reported DUI arrests a year  
13 between 2011 and 2021, not including arrests made by tribal law enforcement; and

14 WHEREAS, according to data available from the Montana Department of Transportation, between  
15 2011 and 2020, 1,227 people were killed in crashes involving an impaired driver in Montana and another 2,997  
16 people were seriously injured; and

17 WHEREAS, the 69th Legislature heard numerous bills seeking to deter DUI offenses, including  
18 measures seeking to increase penalties, revise sentencing requirements, and expand the types of substances  
19 to which DUI laws would apply; and

20 WHEREAS, the last time Montana's DUI laws were studied by a legislative interim committee was  
21 during the 2009-2010 interim, and changes in technology, policy, and available research and data have likely  
22 occurred since that study concluded; and

23 WHEREAS, certain factors may impact a person's decision to drive under the influence in Montana,  
24 including limited availability of transportation alternatives and the locations of bars relative to population  
25 centers; and

26 WHEREAS, Montana has historically had a permissive culture regarding drinking and driving that  
27 continues today; and

28 WHEREAS, 27 states have taken measures, such as mandating or highly incentivizing ignition

1 interlocks for all convicted drunk drivers, even for first-time offenders; and

2 WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has identified strategies to prevent  
3 impaired driving; and

4 WHEREAS, DUI offenses continue to impact the safety of citizens on Montana roadways with 203  
5 fatalities in 2024 and 34 so far in 2025.

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

9 That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee or statutory  
10 committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, to:

11 (1) review Montana's current statutory scheme related to driving under the influence of alcohol or  
12 drugs;

13 (2) evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of Montana's current DUI statutes, particularly the  
14 effectiveness of penalties in deterring offenses, and how Montana's laws compare or contrast to those of other  
15 states;

16 (3) examine Montana's current rates of incarceration due to DUI convictions, available treatment  
17 options for offenders, and possible alternatives to incarceration; and

18 (4) analyze factors that may contribute to the prevalence of DUI problems in Montana, including  
19 whether there is a culture of acceptance of driving under the influence and what, if anything, the Legislature  
20 might do to address this issue.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review  
22 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2026.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,  
24 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 70th Legislature.

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