

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 48

INTRODUCED BY M. YAKAWICH, G. HERTZ, T. MCGILLVRAY

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPACTS OF MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 70TH LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, the legalization of recreational and medical marijuana in Montana has led to evolving patterns in public health, youth behavior, criminal justice, and behavioral health; and

WHEREAS, Montana lacks a centralized data system to track and monitor the effects of marijuana legalization, limiting the ability of policymakers and communities to respond effectively; and

WHEREAS, high-potency marijuana products remain legally available and have been linked to increased risks of psychosis, depression, anxiety, and cannabis use disorder, particularly among youth and individuals with mental health vulnerabilities; and

WHEREAS, schools, emergency departments, behavioral health providers, treatment centers, community coalitions, and law enforcement have called for better data to inform prevention, treatment, and public safety strategies; and

WHEREAS, the Montana Legislature has a responsibility to ensure that marijuana policy protects youth, promotes public safety, and supports access to treatment.

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, to conduct a narrowly focused interim study on the public health and safety impacts of marijuana legalization in Montana. The study must examine, at a minimum:

(1) emergency room and urgent care trends related to marijuana and high-potency tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) product use, including psychosis, accidental ingestion, and other health effects;

(2) youth marijuana use and its impact on academic achievement and the school environment, including academic performance, absenteeism, behavioral issues, and disciplinary actions;

(3) impacts of marijuana use on the criminal justice system, including arrests, citations, driving under the influence, collisions that involve impaired driving due to marijuana use, and court filings involving marijuana;

(4) demand for substance use disorder treatment services and the capacity of the behavioral health system to respond;

(5) the prevalence and treatment of marijuana-associated mental health disorders, including cannabis-induced psychosis, depression, suicidality, and anxiety; and

(6) gaps in current data collection.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study:

(1) engage stakeholders, including schools and school-based health staff, student resource officers, behavioral health and substance use professionals, law enforcement, emergency departments and primary care professionals, public health officials, law enforcement and justice system stakeholders, tribal nations and tribal health representatives, and local government leaders and community coalitions, to ensure a collaborative and inclusive study process; and

(2) use objective, data-driven, and nonpartisan analysis, free from industry or political influence.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that on completion of the study, the committee compile the findings into a comprehensive report to inform future policy. The report must include, at a minimum:

(1) a summary of data and stakeholder input;

(2) gaps in policy and data collection identified by the study;

(3) recommendations and proposed strategies to improve statewide marijuana policy and the collection, tracking, coordination, and reporting of data related to marijuana and its use in the state; and

(4) proposed legislative or regulatory strategies to improve prevention, treatment access, youth protection, and public safety.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including data collection, analysis, and stakeholder input, be completed prior to September 15, 2026.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,

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