

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 52

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6 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
7 MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A STATE CATTLE
8 ASSESSMENT AND A MONTANA CATTLE COMMITTEE TO FUND AND ADMINISTER RESEARCH,
9 PROMOTION, AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO ENHANCE THE MONTANA CATTLE
10 INDUSTRY; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 70TH
11 LEGISLATURE.

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13 WHEREAS, the beef industry is a vital and longstanding cornerstone of the state of Montana's
14 agricultural economy, with over 2.5 million cattle raised across the state annually, contributing significantly to
15 the state's gross domestic product, rural communities, and job market; and

16 WHEREAS, the production of cattle and beef provides a viable living for many Montanans and serves
17 as the economic foundation of many communities; and

18 WHEREAS, the stabilization, maintenance, and expansion of markets for Montana cattle is necessary
19 in order to provide consumers with an adequate supply of high-quality beef; and

20 WHEREAS, the state of Montana has established a reputation for producing some of the best beef in
21 the world, and Montana's high-quality beef is a respected product in national and international markets; and

22 WHEREAS, supporting Montana's beef industry is critical to maintaining the state's reputation for
23 producing some of the best beef in the world; and

24 WHEREAS, the Montana cattle industry faces numerous challenges, including fluctuating market
25 prices, rising feed and input costs, trade barriers, and increased competition from foreign beef imports; and

26 WHEREAS, the Montana Legislature recognizes the importance of ensuring that the state's beef
27 industry remains competitive, sustainable, and supported through favorable policies, shared organization,
28 education and promotion, market access, and fair trade agreements.

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

4 That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee or statutory
5 committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, to examine the profitability and marketability of the state's cattle
6 industry, propose legislation to improve management, research, education, and promotion of state beef and
7 beef products, and support the expansion of domestic and international markets for Montana cattle.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee:

9 (1) consider the implementation of a state assessment on Montana cattle to fund the promotion,
10 marketing, research of, and education about Montana cattle and cattle products, similar to the National Beef
11 Checkoff Program but at the state level;

12 (2) review how similar state-level cattle assessments were implemented in other states, including
13 but not limited to North Dakota, Idaho, Washington, Utah, California, and Texas;

14 (3) examine stakeholder research and recommendations for conducting a referendum of Montana
15 cattle producers to determine the level of interest for a state cattle assessment;

16 (4) investigate options for an assessment collection and refund distribution process, similar to
17 existing processes for the refund of assessments on wheat, barley, and pulse crops in Title 80, chapter 11,
18 MCA;

19 (5) explore existing resources that could be utilized, including but not limited to the Montana Beef
20 Council; and

21 (6) evaluate the membership of a potential quasi-state agency commodity board to administer and
22 manage the state cattle assessment and funds, including the membership selection and the appointment
23 process.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee include input from relevant stakeholders,
25 including but not limited to state cattle producers, the Montana Stockgrowers Association, the Montana
26 Cattlemen's Association, the Montana Association of Livestock Auction Markets, the Montana Cattlewomen, the
27 Montana Beef Council, the Intertribal Agriculture Council, the Montana Meat Processors Association, the
28 Montana Cattle Feeders Association, the Montana Farm Bureau Federation, the Montana Farmers Union, and

1 other organizations that have an interest in the production or marketing of Montana cattle and cattle products.

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

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

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