

HOUSE BILL NO. 135

INTRODUCED BY M. MACDONALD

BY REQUEST OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE SCHOOL FUNDING INTERIM COMMITTEE; REQUIRING THE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND COSTS RELATED TO A BASIC SYSTEM OF FREE QUALITY PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS; PROVIDING FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP; REQUIRING ISSUANCE OF A REPORT; APPROPRIATING \$250,000 FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO THE LEGISLATIVE SERVICES DIVISION FOR SUPPORT OF THE COMMITTEE AND ANY CONTRACTED SERVICES; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. **Section 1. School funding interim committee.** (1) There is a school funding interim committee. Pursuant to 20-9-309(5), the committee shall:

(a) conduct a study to reassess the educational needs and costs related to the basic system of free quality public elementary and secondary schools AND SUCH OTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, PUBLIC LIBRARIES, AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AS MAY SUPPORT OR IMPROVE THE BASIC SYSTEM; and

(b) if necessary, incorporate the results of those assessments into the state's funding formula.

(2) In conducting the study, the committee ~~shall~~ MAY:

(a) review the work and conclusions of the quality schools interim committee established in 2005;

(b) review how the state's education funding policy has evolved as a result of litigation;

(c) consider any recommendations provided by other interim or standing legislative committees;

(d) seek input from representatives from the board of public education, the office of public instruction, the governor's office, private organizations, professional educators, school trustees, and members of the public; and

(e) consider the state's existing and projected financial resources as well as the needs and concerns of Montana taxpayers.

(3) The members of the committee are:

(a) four members of the house of representatives, two from each party, appointed by the speaker of the



1 house in consultation with the house majority leader and the house minority leader;

2 (b) four members of the senate, two from each party, appointed by the president of the senate; and

3 (C) A PRESIDING OFFICER APPOINTED BY AGREEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF

4 THE HOUSE; AND

5 ~~(e)~~(D) as ex-officio, nonvoting members:

6 (i) the presiding officer of the board of public education or the presiding officer's designee;

7 (ii) the superintendent of public instruction or the superintendent's designee; and

8 (iii) the governor or the governor's designee.

9 ~~(4) The committee shall select its presiding officer from among the voting members at the first meeting~~  
10 ~~of the committee.~~

11 ~~(5)~~(4) The committee is attached for administrative purposes to the legislative services division.

12 ~~(6)~~(5) The committee may:

13 (a) authorize research and studies to be conducted by reputable and reliable experts in the public or  
14 private sectors; and

15 (b) request research and analysis from the legislative fiscal division, the office of public instruction, the  
16 department of revenue, and any other state agency or entity that maintains information or data relevant to the  
17 study.

18 ~~(7)~~(6) On or before September 15, 2014, the committee shall issue a report on the committee's findings  
19 and recommendations.

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21 NEW SECTION. Section 2. Appropriation. There is appropriated \$250,000 from the general fund to  
22 the legislative services division for the biennium beginning July 1, 2013, to support the activities of the committee  
23 and any contracted services the committee considers to be warranted.

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25 NEW SECTION. Section 3. Effective date. [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

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