

HOUSE BILL NO. 766

INTRODUCED BY B. HAMLETT

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT CREATING A LOCAL HISTORY COMMISSION; ESTABLISHING MEMBERSHIP, DUTIES, AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS OF THE COMMISSION; CREATING OPTIONAL FEES FOR LOCAL HISTORICAL SOCIETIES AND MUSEUMS WHO PARTNER AND PARTICIPATE WITH THE LOCAL HISTORY COMMISSION; CREATING A LOCAL HISTORY COMMISSION SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE."

WHEREAS, Montana is a state rich in local history, and the people of Montana benefit from a deeper understanding of the events, people, and places that have shaped and continue to shape the story of our state; and

WHEREAS, lesser-known local histories are at risk of being lost due to the deterioration of artifacts, the loss of oral histories, and the lack of understanding of the importance of historical documentation; and

WHEREAS, many local museums and historical societies work diligently to create and maintain adequate local records, and the state would benefit from expanding its repository of local history events, sites, and places of significance in order to promote historical education, awareness, and tourism.

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

NEW SECTION. Section 1. Local history commission -- membership -- duties -- reporting. (1)

There is a local history commission administratively attached to the Montana historical society.

(2) The commission consists of seven citizens appointed by the board of trustees of the Montana historical society. Commission members shall represent various geographic and cultural areas of the state and may be representatives of a museum, historical society, or other entity that specializes in historical research.

(3) (a) The commission shall meet semiannually by teleconference, with its first meeting occurring no later than December 31, 2019.

(b) The commission shall notify all county historical societies or historical museums within 10 days of the commission's first meeting to inform the historical societies and museums of the purpose of the commission in order to stimulate partnerships as provided in subsection (5).

- 1 (4) To develop a sufficient local history repository, the commission shall:
- 2 (a) solicit the public for information related to local historical events, sites, or places of significance that
- 3 may not currently have adequate records to ensure the public is educated of the event, site, or place;
- 4 (b) evaluate the information provided by the public and determine the validity of historical claims;
- 5 (c) conduct research of historical events, sites, or places of significance in each member's respective
- 6 area, focusing primarily on historical events, sites, or places of significance that are either inadequately recorded
- 7 or are at risk of losing adequate records;
- 8 (d) create documentation that accurately and adequately records local history events, sites, or places
- 9 of significance that are determined to be in most need of documentation; and
- 10 (e) maintain a map that locates the historical events, sites, or places of significance that were
- 11 researched, validated, and determined by the commission to lack public awareness and education.
- 12 (5) Commission members shall develop partnerships with the historical society of each county or, if the
- 13 county does not have a historical society, the commission shall designate a local history museum in the county
- 14 to partner with the commission. The county historical society or designated local history museum may:
- 15 (a) agree to partner with the local history commission in order to ensure local history documentation is
- 16 created or maintained;
- 17 (b) identify to the commission local history events, locations, or artifacts in the respective county that are
- 18 in need of documentation; and
- 19 (c) pay a one-time fee of \$50 to have local history documentation that is gathered in the county deposited
- 20 at the Montana historical society.
- 21 (6) The commission shall annually report its findings to the Montana historical society, who shall deposit
- 22 and hold the records of the local history commission.

23

24 **NEW SECTION. Section 2. Local history commission special revenue account.** There is an account

25 in the state special revenue fund established in 17-2-102 known as the local history commission account. The

26 fees collected in [section 1(5)(c)] must be deposited in the account to be used by the Montana historical society

27 for costs incurred for housing the documentation collected by the local history commission.

28

29 **NEW SECTION. Section 3. Codification instruction.** [Sections 1 and 2] are intended to be codified

30 as an integral part of Title 22, chapter 3, and the provisions of Title 22, chapter 3, apply to [sections 1 and 2].

1

2 NEW SECTION. **Section 4. Effective date.** [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

3

- END -