

## 1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 41

2 INTRODUCED BY D. LENZ

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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 HOME-BASED AND FAMILY CHILD-CARE  
6 PROVIDERS; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE  
7 70TH LEGISLATURE.  
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9 WHEREAS, the purpose of the Montana Child Care Act of 1989 is "to assure that children requiring day  
10 care be provided such food, shelter, security and safety, guidance and direction, nurture and comfort, and  
11 learning experiences commensurate to their ages and capabilities so as to safeguard [their] growth and  
12 development"; and

13 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that the availability of quality child care is critical to the self-sufficiency  
14 and independence of Montana families and parents who work out of economic necessity and have young  
15 children; and

16 WHEREAS, the number of quality day-care arrangements falls short of the number required for  
17 children, especially in rural Montana; and

18 WHEREAS, many families in rural Montana are income-eligible for Best Beginnings child-care  
19 scholarships but do not have access to registered or licensed providers and thus cannot benefit from this  
20 assistance; and

21 WHEREAS, many families prefer to keep their children in home-based child care; and

22 WHEREAS, caregivers can provide more personalized attention and nurturing to smaller groups of  
23 children, which is crucial for building secure attachments and fostering healthy emotional development; and

24 WHEREAS, the lower turnover of small child-care settings fosters strong bonds between babies and  
25 their consistent caregivers, which is essential for early brain and emotional development; and

26 WHEREAS, programs that keep the same staff for long periods of time give children more stability and  
27 reduce children's anxiety about changes in the very important adults in their lives; and

28 WHEREAS, infants and toddlers especially need nurturing from the same caregiver every day, so they

1 can build trusting relationships; and

2 WHEREAS, operating a home day care creates a new child-care option for several families in a  
3 community and generates an income for the provider, which is a dual benefit to the community's families and  
4 economy; and

5 WHEREAS, the Montana Legislature can enact laws that promote the provision of licensed and  
6 registered day care by providers in rural communities.

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

10 That the Legislative Council be requested to designate, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, the  
11 Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee to:

12 (1) explore ways to create and support sustainable, long-term development of home-based and  
13 family child-care providers, especially in rural Montana and other child-care deserts where parents who qualify  
14 for subsidies have very few registered or licensed options available;

15 (2) streamline licensure and regulation of home-based and family day-care providers; and

16 (3) investigate other barriers to providing and accessing home-based day care in the state.

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee draft legislation to codify licensure and regulation of  
18 home-based and family day-care providers, ensuring that providers and families can easily access this  
19 information as it will be clearly laid out in statute.

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

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

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