

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 9

INTRODUCED BY E. HILL, B. BENNETT, A. DOANE, C. LARSEN, M. MOE, C. SCHREINER

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA URGING SUPPORT FOR PASSENGER RAIL SERVICES IN MONTANA.

WHEREAS, trains are one of the most energy-efficient ways to move people; and

WHEREAS, commercial airline service to many counties and communities in Montana is inadequate; and

WHEREAS, some communities in Montana are poorly served by public transportation, and passenger rail services provide mobility for senior citizens, persons with disabilities, students, and business people; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak was created in 1971 from what remained of private passenger railroads and has been starved of investment and direction from the United States Congress and several presidential administrations; and

WHEREAS, the North Coast Hiawatha ceased operation through southern Montana in 1979, and transportation to and from the major population centers of southern Montana would be greatly enhanced by passenger rail service; and

WHEREAS, restoring passenger rail service through southern Montana would stimulate Montana's economy through increased tourism spending and an associated increase in job opportunities; and

WHEREAS, tourism is Montana's second-largest industry and would be enhanced by improved passenger rail service along the Hi-line; and

WHEREAS, increased passenger rail services will increase railroad-related employment because of the need for upgraded rail infrastructure and operating personnel; and

WHEREAS, the Empire Builder is one of the most popular long-distance passenger trains in the United States and is greatly needed for the citizens of Montana's Hi-line who have limited public transportation options, but is challenged by lack of rail capacity causing frequent delays.

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

(1) That the United States Congress is urged to take tangible steps to secure funding for and develop plans to restore passenger rail service through southern Montana. This should be part of a national essential



1 passenger rail policy that does not sacrifice the passenger rail needs of the rural American West for intercity
2 high-speed rail.

3 (2) That Congress continue to support the Empire Builder, which is a critical transportation component
4 along Montana's Hi-line.

5 (3) That the Secretary of State send copies of this resolution to Montana's Congressional Delegation, the
6 Majority Leader of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the
7 President of the United States, the United States Secretary of Transportation, and the Amtrak Board of Directors.

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