**Montana 2035 Initiative: Building a Sustainability Plan for Montana**

**Description:** Creates a task force to formulate the Montana 2035 Sustainability Plan. Requires the Auditor to prepare the Montana 2035 Sustainability Plan.

AN INITIATIVE TO CRAFT A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN FOR THE STATE OF MONTANA

SECTION 1. Montana is a unique and beautiful state. For many, it is the ideal place to live and is second to none for providing a preferred quality of life. However, to improve or even maintain the quality of life in this State, planning the overall theme and goals of the State is important to our future success.

There are many real, serious, and immediate problems that our State faces on an annual basis. While it is the government's responsibility to resolve those issues, it is also government's responsibility to keep a watchful eye on the future and guide the State in the right direction for succeeding generations.

Thus, the time has come to review the fundamental components of community planning. Specifically, many quality-of-life issues, including water quality, air quality, land use, energy, and forest resources, are important to the people of Montana and should be the focus for planning Montana’s future.

The purpose of this Initiative is to:

(1) Establish a Montana 2035 task force to review the existing state plans, recommendations, assessments and other fundamental components of state and community planning, and to develop recommendations on creating the Montana 2035 Sustainability Plan; and

(2) Require the auditor to prepare the Montana 2035 Sustainability Plan to define and implement state goals, objectives, policies, and priority guidelines to aid in the future long-term development of the State.

SECTION 2. **Montana 2035 task force; establishment; membership; appointment; compensation; duties**. A Montana 2035 task force will be established to review specifically the recommendations of the Montana Climate Solutions Council and other fundamental components of community planning.

The task force shall consist of twenty-five members as follows:

(1) Four members from the senate appointed by the senate president;

(2) Four members from the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

(3) A representative of the governor appointed by the governor;

(4) The director of the Department of Agriculture or the director's designee;

(5) The director of the Department of Commerce or the director's designee;

(6) The auditor or the auditor's designee;

(7) One member from the University of Montana to be appointed by the president of the University of Montana; and

(8) One member from Montana State University to be appointed by the president of the Montana State University; and

(9) Nine county planning officials and directors representing districts in Montana to include east, southeast, southwest; central, north-central and south-central; and west, northwest and southwest regions of Montana chosen from a lottery of participants nominated by the individual county planning departments or agencies for the designated areas.

(a) State agencies shall assist the task force in performing its duties as required under this Initiative. In carrying out its duties under this Initiative, the task force may also request staff assistance from the department of administration; department of commerce; department of transportation; department of fish, wildlife and parks; department of agriculture, department of environmental quality, the state library and other appropriate state and county agencies.

(b) The members of the task force shall select the chairperson of the task force and shall be reimbursed for expenses, including travel expenses, necessary for the performance of their duties.

(c) The task force shall review, solicit input on, and develop recommendations for the creation of the Montana 2035 sustainability plan to ensure its relevance as a guide for the future long-term development of the State and report to the legislature and the governor on creating the plan. The task force shall also submit recommendations that include but are not limited to:

(1) Whether the existing bases for determining priorities; allocating limited resources, such as public funds, services, human resources, land, energy, water, and other resources; and improving coordination of federal, state, and county plans, policies, programs, projects, and regulatory activities are adequate and, if not, a recommendation on how to improve them;

(2) A listing of Montana’s inherent economic assets and how best to use those assets to define Montana’s role in the global economy;

(3) How to forecast educational needs within the State and direct the education and training of Montana’s workforce to ensure that Montana residents learn marketable skills in secondary school, university, and adult training programs and are able to afford these programs;

(4) The development of a framework to ensure that pollution and other adverse effects caused by economic growth are mitigated;

(5) An assessment of the tools needed for the private sector to better compete in the local, national and global economies and the means to increase exports, and whether these tools would have any adverse economic or environmental impact on the State and its residents; and

(6) How best to engage the community in a public discussion to achieve a consensus on the State's preferred future, and coordinate the actions needed to sustain a growing and vibrant economy, while maintaining a high quality of life for all residents and visitors.

The task force shall develop criteria or benchmarks as necessary to assist in the development of measuring incremental compliance with task force recommendations enacted into law or adopted as policies by governmental agencies and in guiding budgetary priorities.

SECTION 3. **Report.**The task force shall submit a report on its recommendations, including any implementing legislation, to the legislature and to the State auditor no later than twenty days before the convening of the session of 2023.

SECTION 4. **Montana 2035 Sustainability Plan.**After receipt of the task force's report, the office of the auditor shall prepare the Montana 2035 Sustainability Plan. The plan shall be prepared to define and implement state goals, objectives, policies, and priority guidelines. Over an 18-month period, the auditor shall seek input from all state departments. The auditor shall also solicit public views and concerns in preparation of the plan and shall incorporate all or a portion of the recommendations reported by the Montana 2035 task force.

The plan shall serve as a guideline for funding and implementation by state and county agencies.

(a) The auditor shall submit the sustainability plan to the legislature no later than twenty days before the convening of the regular session of 2025.

(b) The auditor, with the assistance of the office of planning, shall update the plan every ten years and report to the legislature.

SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Montana the sum of $10,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2021-2022 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for the review and recommendations of the Montana 2035 plan and other fundamental components of community planning to be performed by the Montana 2035 task force. The sums appropriated shall be expended by the office of the auditor for the purposes of this initiative.

SECTION 6. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $25,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 for creating the Montana 2035 sustainability plan. The sums appropriated shall be expended by the office of the auditor for the purposes of this initiative.

SECTION 7. The Montana 2035 task force shall cease to operate after the adjournment sine die of the 2023 regular session of the legislature.

SECTION 8. This Initiative is proposed to take effect on January 1, 2020.