

HOUSE BILL NO. 203

INTRODUCED BY C. SCHOMER, S. KLAKKEN, J. SECKINGER, K. LOVE, J. SOOKTIS, C. COCHRAN, E. TILLEMAN, D. BEDEY, E. BUTTREY, S. GIST, C. HINKLE, R. MARSHALL, N. NICOL, A. REGIER, C. SPRUNGER, D. HARVEY, S. FITZPATRICK, B. LER, L. DEMING, J. GILLETTE, B. BARKER, L. BREWSTER, T. FALK, J. FITZPATRICK, T. FRANCE, D. LENZ, T. MCGILLVRAY, B. MERCER, B. MITCHELL, G. NIKOLAKAKOS, K. SEEKINS-CROWE, S. MANESS, J. HINKLE, C. FITZPATRICK

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR MONTANA MINING DAY."

WHEREAS, the state motto of Montana, adopted on February 9, 1865, is "oro y plata", which is Spanish for "gold and silver", and reflects our mining heritage and vast mineral wealth; and

WHEREAS, the Great Seal of the state of Montana is a vivid symbol of all that is special about our state and includes the state motto and a miner's pick and shovel; and

WHEREAS, the nickname of Montana is "the Treasure State", which was chosen because of the state's vast mineral resources; and

WHEREAS, gold was first discovered in Montana in the 1850s, leading to major finds at Bannack, Virginia City, Silver Bow Creek, and Prickly Pear Creek; and

WHEREAS, these major finds brought many of the first settlers and developers to Montana, leading to its early economic and societal growth and the discovery and development of many other deposits of metals and minerals, including coal, silver, and copper; and

WHEREAS, mining in Montana subsequently grew and supplied the nation with much of its mineral resource needs, including copper from Butte that was smelted in Anaconda and refined in Great Falls, and which powered the electrification of America and fueled the country's victorious efforts in both World Wars; and

WHEREAS, the mining of lignite and bituminous coal from eastern Montana coal beds heated homes and fired steam-powered locomotives in the early 20th century and continues to provide the largest share of Montana's electricity generation; and

WHEREAS, Montana's placer, underground, and surface mining employed thousands at hundreds of mines, producing billions in wealth; and

1 WHEREAS, the mining industry continues to contribute billions of dollars to Montana's economy,  
2 creating thousands of permanent jobs and millions of dollars in tax revenues to the state and local communities  
3 each year; and

4 WHEREAS, there have been thousands of miners who died in the early days of Montana mining, but  
5 whose deaths have led to world-leading safety and labor standards for workers today; and

6 WHEREAS, there have been historic environmental and social impacts from mining in Montana that  
7 have led to world-leading environmental regulations and financial assurances for the protection of our  
8 environment and communities; and

9 WHEREAS, the Montana Legislature authorized in 1893 the creation of the Montana State School of  
10 Mines in Butte, now known as Montana Technological University (Montana Tech), which continues to be one of  
11 the nation's leading schools in the science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) and mining of natural  
12 resources today; and

13 WHEREAS, Montana continues to hold significant deposits of minerals, including those critical for our  
14 nation's current and future defense, economic and technological advancement, and energy transition and  
15 security; and

16 WHEREAS, our state is proud of its heritage, its present, and its future in mining and mineral  
17 processing and believes it is vital to promote and educate the public about the costs and benefits of responsible  
18 mining in Montana sufficiently and accurately.

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

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22 NEW SECTION. Section 1. Montana mining day. There is established a mining day for the state of  
23 Montana. The Montana mining day is February 9 of each year to commemorate when the territorial government  
24 adopted the state motto.

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26 NEW SECTION. Section 2. Codification instruction. [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an  
27 integral part of Title 1, chapter 1, part 2, and the provisions of Title 1, chapter 1, part 2, apply to [section 1].

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