

YMCA YOUTH LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

_____ Bill Number _____

Legislative Action:

Introduced by: Jestin Murphy
Authored by: Jestin Murphy

House Committee: _____
House: _____
Senate Committee: _____
Senate: _____
Governor: _____

Delegation: Hardin High School

Referred to Committee: _____

1 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "An Act to Require Montana Residents to Obtain a High
2 School Diploma or Equivalency in Order to be Eligible for State Welfare Benefits"

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4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE MONTANA YMCA YOUTH LEGISLATURE:

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6 **Section 1. INTENT:** The intent of this bill is to encourage persons to obtain a high
7 school diploma or equivalent, thereby preparing them to enter the workforce and become self
8 supporting.

9 **Section 2. STATISTICS:** According to the Editorial Projects in Education
10 Research Center, about 24 percent of all students in Montana fail to graduate from high school
11 with a regular diploma in four years. Nationally, one-third of students leave high school without
12 a diploma. In the United States about half of all welfare recipients and half the prison
13 population lack a high school degree (Educational Testing Service, 1995; National Research
14 Council, 1993). High school degree holders earn far more than dropouts working full time
15 (Mishel & Bernstein, 1994;U.S. Department of Education, 1999). The dropouts cost the State of
16 Montana through the Welfare Program and the prison system.

17 **Section 3. FUNDING:** If funding is needed for this bill, it will come from the General
18 Fund.

19 **Section 4. EFFECTIVE DATE:** This bill will become effective immediately upon
20 passage.

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