

RESOLUTION  
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
WHEATLAND MEMORIAL HEALTHCARE

WHEREAS, numerous reports and studies authored by the University of Montana, including well respected consulting firms, have independently demonstrated the HELP Act has significantly benefited more than 95,000 Montanans who have received Healthcare coverage as of October 1, 2018, representing 9.3% of our state's population; and

WHEREAS, the HELP Act's has improved health outcomes and led to early detection of disease and ensured 7,026 women received breast cancer screenings, averted 2,313 possible cases of colon cancer, provided 28,683 patients with outpatient mental health services, delivered outpatient substance abuse treatment to 7,146 adults, in total 86,995 adults received preventive services from HELP Act benefits; and

WHEREAS, in Wheatland County, more than 653 residents representing almost 30% of the population are now receiving Healthcare coverage under the HELP Act, resulting in 1,092 preventative primary care visits; and

WHEREAS, hospitals across Montana have seen uninsured rates reduced 48% and more importantly, Wheatland Memorial Healthcare has remained financially viable due to the 18.4% reduction in uncompensated care levels; and

WHEREAS, Wheatland Memorial Healthcare has redirected savings from its reduction in uncompensated care into replacing needed capital equipment such as CT and Ultrasound. Further it the savings allows for the continuation of needed clinic and emergency department services.

WHEREAS, although the HELP Act has benefited Wheatland Memorial Health Care and other hospitals, the loss of coverage would in many cases cause irreparable harm and put at risk the financial viability of our hospital and others. Last year our operational loss totaled \$256,179 and without the HELP Act, the total loss could balloon to \$1,585,716. Wheatland Memorial Health Care employs 70 full time equivalent employees and finished the fiscal year (December 31, 2018) with ten days cash on hand. The loss of \$1,329,537 in Medicaid expansion funds would severely limit the type and scope of services Wheatland Memorial Health Care can offer to the community.

WHEREAS, Healthcare is the largest source of private sector income in Montana, representing 1 in 5 dollars earned and the second largest source of private sector employment representing 15.6% of the industry total, paying 25% higher than the statewide average; and

WHEREAS, the HELP Act has significantly stimulated Montana's economy according to the University of Montana's Bureau of Business and Economic Research, which reported that as the result of the HELP Act, 5,000 new jobs, \$270 million in personal income and \$500 million in additional economic output has been added to Montana's economy. Additionally, the HELP Act is expected to generate \$1.2 billion in personal income and \$2.6 billion in economic output or new sales; and

WHEREAS, the HELP Act has served as an economic incentive for small businesses unable to provide health insurance by making coverage available for working Montanans and generating

\$36 million in state budget savings by using federal funds to pay for state programs, freeing up state tax dollars for other priorities; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF WHEATLAND MEMORIAL HEALTHCARE endorses the HELP Act and supports repealing the sunset of the Act and further recognizes our patients, caregivers, and the citizens of Wheatland County have a compelling interest in ensuring our hospital remains financially viable and an economic engine for our surrounding area; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF WHEATLAND MEMORIAL HEALTHCARE strongly requests our legislative delegation and the Montana Legislature to repeal the sunset of the HELP Act and protect Healthcare coverage for almost 100,000 Montanans and the \$2.6 billion economic engine it has created.

APPROVED ON THIS DAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2019, BY THE GOVERNING BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF WHEATLAND MEMORIAL HEALTHCARE.

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