

RESOLUTION
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BENEFIS MEDICAL GROUP

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 health care coverage as of October 1, 2018, representing 9.3% of our state's population; and

WHEREAS, access to screenings, primary care services, and preventative services have been shown to improve health status and reduce long-term health care costs by preventing the types of health deterioration that lead to Emergency Department visits, hospitalizations, and other intensive treatment; and

WHEREAS, the HELP Act has improved health outcomes and led to early detection of disease, 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, and provided 86,995 adults with general preventive services; and

WHEREAS, in Cascade County, more than 7,300 residents representing almost 9% of the population are now receiving health care coverage under the HELP Act, resulting in 7,626 preventative primary care visits; and

WHEREAS, the HELP Act has resulted in 7,146 adults receiving outpatient substance abuse treatment and 1,884 receiving residential substance abuse treatment, important statistics given that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ranks Montana as the state with the highest suicide rate in the nation and research has linked substance abuse to suicidal ideation; and

WHEREAS, Benefis Health System has redirected savings from its reduction in uncompensated care as a result of the HELP Act into recruiting and adding the types of physicians to Benefis Medical Group that Montana has significant shortages of and desperately needs more of, including a pediatric psychiatrist (note, one 2018 study estimated that Montana's current number of psychiatrists is adequate to meet only 25.5% of the state's need for psychiatric services), as well as additional primary care physicians (with primary care being a clinical area in which many organizations, including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, have identified Montana to have a shortage of providers); 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 DIRECTORS OF BENEFIS MEDICAL GROUP endorses the HELP Act and supports repealing the sunset of the Act and further recognizes our patients, caregivers, and the citizens of Cascade County have a compelling interest in ensuring our health system remains financially viable and an economic engine for our surrounding area; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF BENEFIS MEDICAL GROUP strongly requests our legislative delegation and the Montana Legislature to reach a bipartisan solution to continue Medicaid Expansion beyond its scheduled sunset date and protect health care coverage for almost 100,000 Montanans and the \$2.6 billion economic engine it has created.

APPROVED ON THIS DAY, DECEMBER __, 2018, BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF BENEFIS MEDICAL GROUP.

<u>Greg Ticooney MD</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
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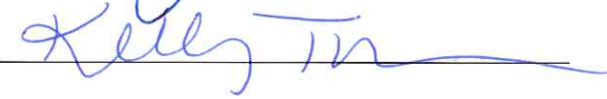
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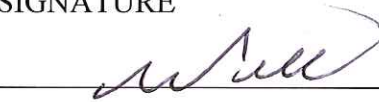
Kelly Timmer



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