

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF MEDICAID EXPANSION
ADOPTED BY THE PROVIDENCE MONTANA COMMUNITY MISSION BOARD

WHEREAS, Providence Montana—Providence St. Patrick Hospital, Providence St. Joseph Medical Center and Providence Medical Group—exists to improve the health of the patients and communities we serve;

WHEREAS, a significant body of research, studies and reports indicate that having health coverage is key to improving the health status of a community;

WHEREAS, a high rate of uninsured residents is linked to an increase in the severity of patient conditions, poorer outcomes, and higher costs as a result of delayed care and seeking emergency care for conditions that could have been avoided or managed through preventative care;

WHEREAS, the expansion of Medicaid in Montana has provided healthcare coverage to low-income Montanans who otherwise have few other options for healthcare coverage, helping to reduce the rate of uninsured Montanans by 45% and residents of Missoula, Lake and Ravalli counties by 10.6-14.1%, respectively, since Medicaid expansion was implemented;

WHEREAS, Montana is experiencing a behavioral health crisis, and Montana's expansion of Medicaid provides a stable payment source for behavioral health services including \$54 million in new funds for substance abuse disorder prevention and medication-assisted treatment to address the state's opioid epidemic;

WHEREAS, in 2023, Medicaid expansion in Missoula/Lake/Ravalli counties has improved health outcomes and led to early detection of disease, including breast cancer screenings and treatment for 1162 women, 761 colon cancer screenings which potentially averted 324 cases of cancer, mental health services for 8203 patients, and substance abuse treatment for 1039 patients;

WHEREAS, Montana has the 13th lowest rate of state general fund spending on Medicaid nationally and a lower rate of spending than peer states (CO, ND, SD, WA, WY), including those states that have not expanded Medicaid (SD, WY);

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion has significantly grown Montana's economy according to a 2023 study conducted by ABMJ Consulting, which reported that Medicaid expansion helped create and sustain over 7,500 new jobs across multiple industries, and generated an estimated \$475 million in new personal income and \$775 million in economic activity in 2022. For Missoula/Lake/Ravalli counties, Medicaid expansion has supported 1568 jobs, \$100.1M in personal income and \$234.3M in local economic activity;

WHEREAS, Providence St. Patrick Hospital and Providence St. Joseph Medical Center have remained financially viable due in large part to a 76% reduction in uncompensated care levels since Medicaid expansion took effect;

WHEREAS, Providence St. Patrick Hospital and Providence St. Joseph Medical Center are currently facing unprecedented financial pressures as expenses have increased roughly 21% since 2019 (driven by post-pandemic forces including a shortage of healthcare workers and reliance on temporary contractors, increased prices for drugs and other supplies) paired with < 2% change to reimbursement anticipated in 2024 compared to the prior year;

WHEREAS, the payments received for caring for Medicaid patients represents 16.7% (2022) of Providence St. Patrick Hospital and Providence St. Joseph Medical Center revenues, which support the financial stability of our organization for all who depend on us for care;

WHEREAS, residents from our service area receive care not only from us but several other Montana hospitals, independent physicians and health services, and the ability of these providers to remain financially viable and continue to provide care to all patients may be negatively impacted by significant changes to or the sunset of Medicaid expansion in Montana;

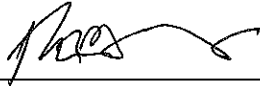
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Providence Montana Community Mission Board, endorses Medicaid Expansion in Montana and further recognizes that such support is consistent with our Mission of revealing and fostering God's healing love to all we serve, especially the poor and vulnerable; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Providence Montana Community Mission Board endorses Montana's current Medicaid expansion program, supports repealing the sunset of the program, and further recognizes our patients, caregivers, and the citizens of Missoula, Lake and Ravalli counties have a compelling interest in ensuring our hospital remains able to continue to provide all of the high-quality services we currently provide to our patients; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Providence Montana Community Mission Board strongly requests our legislative delegation and the Montana Legislature repeal the sunset of the Medicaid Reform and Integrity Act passed in 2019 and protect healthcare coverage for low-income Montanans and the \$775 million economic engine it has created; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Providence Montana Community Mission Board recognizes that program changes will be necessary without this funding, and our organization will inform our community members and local legislators on the impacts to local healthcare services should the Legislature not renew the program.

APPROVED ON THIS DAY, OCTOBER 24, 2023, BY THE PROVIDENCE MONTANA COMMUNITY MISSION BOARD.



Reed Humphrey, PhD, Vice-Chair

Board Members:

Mark Williams, Chair, Missoula, MT
Bruce Bollen, MD, Missoula, MT
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Benjamin Davis, Missoula, MT
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