

RESOLUTION
SUPPORTING CONTINUATION OF MONTANA
MEDICAID EXPANSION
ADOPTED BY THE RIVERSTONE BOARD OF HEALTH AND
THE RIVERSTONE HEALTH CLINIC BOARD

WHEREAS, RiverStone Health’s mission is to improve life, health and safety for residents of Yellowstone County and the people it serves across the region; and

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

WHEREAS, lack of healthcare coverage is a major public health issue that results in unnecessary disease and premature death, untreated mental illness, and poorer quality of life; and

WHEREAS, people who are uninsured are less likely to seek basic preventive care and regular medical checkups that can prevent disease and illness; and

WHEREAS, the Medicaid expansion in Montana provides healthcare coverage to low-income Montanans, who otherwise have no options for healthcare coverage, and has helped reduce the rate of uninsured Montanans by 45% and residents of Yellowstone County by 54% since enacted in 2015; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, Medicaid expansion in Yellowstone County improved health outcomes and led to early detection of diseases, including breast cancer screenings and treatment for 922 women, 512 colon cancer screenings which potentially prevented 151 cases of cancer, mental health services for 7,468 patients and substance abuse treatment for 2,172 patients; and

WHEREAS, while the United States and Montana are experiencing a behavioral health crisis, and Medicaid expansion provides for 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 Montana’s opioid epidemic; and

WHEREAS, as of July 2023 nearly 16,700 Yellowstone County workers are enrolled in Medicaid expansion, which is approximately 10% of the population of the county; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid provides healthcare coverage for more than 30% of workers in the housekeeping, food service and childcare industries and coverage for more than 20% of workers who are personal care attendants, servers, cashiers, retail sales associates and laborers; and

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 Yellowstone County, Medicaid expansion has supported 1,583 jobs, \$113.6 million in personal income and \$262.5 million in local economic activity; and

WHEREAS, residents from our service area receive care not only from RiverStone Health but other Montana healthcare providers such as hospitals, independent physicians and other 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; and

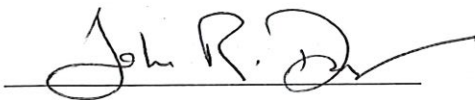
WHEREAS, Montana invests \$900,000 in state funds which is matched by Medicaid expansion dollars thus creating a \$6 million stable funding source for graduate medical education (GME) which is critical to ensuring the next generation of healthcare providers for Montanans; and

WHEREAS, the RiverStone Board of Health and the RiverStone Health Clinic Board has a fiduciary responsibility to our community to plan for the fiscal impacts of any major known or anticipated event on the organization, such as the current Medicaid expansion sunset date of July 2025;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the RiverStone Board of Health and the RiverStone Health Clinic Board supports Montana's current Medicaid expansion program, supports repealing the sunset of the program, and further recognizes that our patients, caregivers, and the citizens of Yellowstone County have a compelling interest in ensuring that RiverStone Health remains financially viable; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the RiverStone Board of Health and the RiverStone Health Clinic Board strongly requests the Yellowstone Valley Area Legislative Delegation and all those serving in the 2025 Session of 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 \$2.1 billion economic engine it has created for Montana.

ADOPTED FEBRUARY 22, 2024 BY RIVERSTONE BOARD OF HEALTH AND THE RIVERSTONE HEALTH CLINIC BOARD.



John Dorr, MD
Chairperson, RiverStone Board of
Health



Bob Reed
Chairperson, RiverStone Health Clinic Board