



**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
HELENA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

Whereas: The Montana Medicaid program, including the expanded coverage for low-income adults authorized by the passage of the HELP Act in 2015 and reauthorized in 2019, supports a strong workforce by allowing low-income, working people to access primary and preventive care services that keep them healthy and showing up to work. And, a healthy, productive workforce is good for employers, good for families and good for Montana’s economy, including in Lewis and Clark County:

- As of November 2024, in Lewis and Clark County, 4,306 adults ages 19-64 are enrolled in Medicaid, which is approximately 5.7% of the population of the county; and
- From November 2023-October 2024 in Lewis and Clark County, expanded Medicaid supported preventative healthcare services for 3,254 people in Lewis and Clark County; mental health services for 2,206 people in Lewis and Clark County; and substance use disorder treatment for 710 people in Lewis and Clark County;

Whereas: The current Medicaid program in Montana supports job growth, personal spending and economic growth throughout the state. Reports show that \$650 million is introduced into Montana’s economy each year because of broadened access to Medicaid. In 2022, Montana Medicaid’s expanded coverage helped create more than 7,500 jobs across multiple industries, \$475 million in personal income, and \$775 million in economic activity, which is in turn reinvested and spent at local businesses including in Lewis and Clark County:

- In Lewis and Clark County specifically, expanded Medicaid has helped create and sustain an estimated 487 jobs, generated approximately \$29.5 million in personal labor income, and produced \$71.7 million in additional local economic activity;

Whereas: The current Medicaid program in Montana creates savings for both patients and the public by giving Medicaid recipients easier access to primary care, in turn avoiding more expensive emergency room visits down the line, and helps hospitals and other healthcare providers provide vital services for a population that critically needs access to primary and preventive care services;

Whereas: Many businesses across the state simply cannot afford to provide costly commercial insurance, so they rely on Montana Medicaid’s current program to provide their employees with the stable, affordable coverage they need;



Whereas: During a time in which Montana is facing a mental health and substance abuse crisis, the current Montana Medicaid program plays an important role in enabling low-income, working Montanans to access care they wouldn't otherwise be able to afford, including counseling and substance use disorder treatment;

Whereas: Medicaid funding is a crucial lifeline for various healthcare services that our members rely on. From dentists and local pharmacies to independent doctors, treatment centers, social workers and physical therapists, the positive health impacts extend far beyond hospital walls and support services throughout the entire community;

Whereas: The current Montana Medicaid program helps keep healthcare costs in check for those not on Medicaid. Changing Montana's current Medicaid program would mean close to 80,000 people would lose their health insurance coverage. Fewer people eligible for Medicaid could create a domino effect that significantly burdens the people of Montana and the healthcare system that cares for them;

Now therefore be it resolved, the Executive Board of Trustees of the Helena Area Chamber of Commerce endorses the HELP Act and further recognizes our local businesses and the citizens of Lewis and Clark County have a compelling interest in ensuring access to healthcare for a healthier workforce and reduced healthcare costs borne by our local businesses; and

Be it further resolved, that the Executive Board of Trustees of the Helena Area Chamber of Commerce strongly requests our legislative delegation and the Montana Legislature repeal the sunset of the HELP Act and protect healthcare coverage for the almost 80,000 Montanans and the economic engine it has created.

APPROVED ON THIS DAY, December 3, 2025 BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE HELENA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Anita Fasbender, Chair
Ashley Deverneiro, Chair-Elect
Travis Brazill
Pat Drynan
Wade Johnson
Steve Mergenthaler
Scott Murphy

Ronda McMillan, Past Chair
Ross Marty
Michael Brown
John Hilton
Lisa Kelley
Joe Mitchell
Scott Patton

Nick Fox, Chair-Elect
Sandra Bauman
Jason Davis
Craig Jenneskens
Kelly McDermott
Scott Murphy
Luke Super