EXHIBIT 12
DATE 2-16-05
HB 563

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Subject: patient assistance

Date: Tue, 15 Feb 2005 16:49:25 -0700

From: "Bonnie Stevens" <bstevens@helenaindianalliance.com> Add to Address Book

To: bigfishpr@yahoo.com

I am a patient advocate at the Leo Pocha Clinic at the Helena Indian Alliance. I help our patients get the medical care that they need. I utilize numerous patient assistance programs offered by the drug manufacturers. Most of the forms they have are very easy to read, easy to fill out and easy to send in. With the proper prescription and documentation, most patients who qualify will have the medicine they need in two to three weeks. They offer refills, and new forms when it is time to re-qualify. I think the system is fine the way it is right now. I truly think that the State of Montana should not be involved in this process. Most drugs are governed by Federal regulations regarding transport and delivery. Each company has a different protocol to ship their medications. Some drugs need refrigeration and some do not. I truly think it would be best to leave the forms in the hands of qualified health workers and not the State of Montana. If you want to help our indigent population with health care, there are other ways to accomplish this. Please let me do the job that I have been trained to do. Sincerely, Bonnie Stevens; Community Resource Advocate

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February 16, 2005

Testimony in support of HB 563

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Eric Schiedermayer. I represent the Montana Catholic Conference, the voice for Montana's two Roman Catholic bishops in the state legislature, who in turn are the spiritual leaders of over 140,000 Montanans.

Our faith reflects God's special concern for the poor and vulnerable and calls us to make their needs our first priority in public life. Our public policies must be carefully considered to ensure that they enhance the lives and dignity of the poor, and not unintentionally do just the opposite. During this time of funding reductions for programs which serve the poor and vulnerable, we must be *especially* careful to avoid this.

The bill you have before you has such an unintended consequence.

Pharmaceutical companies often donate prescription medicines to the poor through various faith-based programs. Inevitably, these programs are understaffed and underfunded. The extra paperwork mandated by this bill will make it that much more difficult to provide this service to the poor, and pharmaceutical companies may decide that it's not worth the trouble.

We ask that you amend this bill to include another exemption under section 1-3 which exempts such donations to the poor.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Schiedermayer
Executive Director, Montana Catholic Conference

Statement in opposition of HB 563

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee,

My name is Lieutenant Steve Staneart, Commanding Officer of The Salvation Army in Helena.

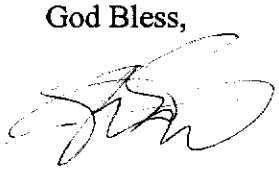
Eight years ago, while stationed in Kalispell, I began a Free Health Clinic for uninsured people in the Flathead Valley. Literally hundreds of volunteer doctors, nurses, and ancillary medical professionals staffed the clinic, and we were able to treat countless maladies and save scores of lives.

A large part of the operation of that clinic was the partnership we have with Pharmaceutical Companies. By filling out one simple form, we were able to obtain prescriptions for our clients free of charge. These companies were also very generous in helping us to acquire physician's samples to dispense.

Our concern is that this bill will put an undue administrative burden on this process, making it more difficult to administrate this program and others like it.

Please defeat HB563, and address the concerns it proposes in a way that will not further burden the indigent of Montana.

God Bless,



Steve Staneart, Lieutenant
Commanding Officer
The Salvation Army, Helena Corps