



EXHIBIT 1
DATE 2/14/2011
HB 409

February 14, 2011

Good afternoon, Chairman Howard and members of the Human Services Committee, my name is Dennis Taylor. I am the policy coordinator for the Montana Children's Initiative (MCI), a provider organization providing children's mental health services, shelter care and foster parent services in virtually every county in the state of Montana.

I appear before you today in support of HB 409, a bill to strengthen and clarify the membership of the DPHHS provider rate commission. MCI supports continuation of the DPHHS rate commission and urges the committee to adopt the commission membership changes proposed in HB 409. HB 409 takes certain state employees off the rate commission to avoid potential conflicts of interest or separation of powers issues.

The bill simply changes and clarifies role of DPHHS department staff, changes Legislative Fiscal Division staff from voting members to non-voting to advise commission based on analysis of DPHHS budget, changes the Governor Office of Budget and Program Planning (OBPP) staff from voting members to non-voting to advise commission based on analysis of DPHHS budget and allows the rate commission to appoint up to three non-voting technical advisors to advise on areas of needed expertise.

MCI supports HB 409 and Rep. Beck's companion bill, HB 410, that provides a framework and timetable for the rate commission to create **transparent** rate setting that is based upon a **clear methodology**. The commission also allows the government to ensure **accountability** of providers for outcomes and to be good **stewards** of the funds we receive. This process creates an open and defensible process free from politics.

The commission was first established during the 2005 Legislative Session under MCA 53-10-201 through 53-10-204 and 53-10-211 and 53-10-212. Since its inception the DPHHS commission has served as a useful forum for provider rate review.

MCI believes these minor structural changes give the DPHHS rate commission greater ability to be effective and achieve its intended purpose. We urge your favorable consideration of these rate commission membership changes and urge you to give HB 409 a "do pass" recommendation. Thank your for your favorable consideration of HB 409.



Montana Children's Initiative

a provider association for montana's children and families

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Montana Children's Initiative Provider Association 2011 Legislative Session Agenda

Mission: Working together for an effective efficient system that cares.

Montana Children's Initiative Members

Acadia Montana, Butte
Bitterroot Valley Educational Co-op, Stevensville
Billings Clinic Psychiatric Services, Billings
Excel, Inc., Billings
Florence Crittenton Home & Services, Helena
Intermountain, Helena & Kalispell
Kairos Youth Services, Great Falls
Montana Youth Home RMDC, Helena
Montana State Foster/Adoptive Parent Association
Montana Community Services Inc., Billings
New Day, Billings
Partnership for Children, Missoula
Watson Children's Shelter, Missoula
Western Montana Mental Health Center, Missoula, Kalispell, Butte & Bozeman
Yellowstone Boys & Girls Ranch, Billings
Youth Homes, Missoula
Youth Dynamics, Billings, Helena & Kalispell

MCI Legislative Priorities

1. Support increased provider rates and budgets for child welfare, juvenile justice and children's mental health serves.
2. Support continuation and strengthening the DPHHS Rate Commission.
3. Advocate for an initiative or study to address needs of children transitioning/aging out of services.
4. Expand Medicaid coverage for children aging out of foster care to 21 years of age.
5. Expand Healthy Montana Kids mental health benefit package.