



SENATE FINANCE & C

Exhibit No. 6Date 4-9-13Bill No. HB 12

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SENATE FINANCE AND CLAIMS COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL 12 - PROVIDER RATES

For the record, I am Rose Hughes, Executive Director of the Montana Health Care Association. We represent nursing homes, assisted living and home care agencies throughout the state of Montana.

We support HB 12.

This legislation was requested by the interim committee on Children, Families, Health and Human Services.

It was developed to provide funding to businesses and programs that contract with DPHHS to provide services to vulnerable Montanans including the elderly in nursing homes and assisted living and those who receive home and community based services. It also includes funds for developmental disability care, mental health services, aging services, and others.

At the heart of this bill is the fact that the rates being paid to providers today are generally at or about the July 1, 2008 level, due to rate freezes and cuts over the last several years. Providers have struggled as their costs have increased for everything from food and medical supplies to utilities and health insurance - while rates paid have been frozen and cut.

The funding provided in this bill was appropriated by the legislature for FY 2011, but former Governor Schweitzer withheld it as part of the budget cuts made in 2010 and 2011. This was done despite a letter from the Legislative Finance Committee suggesting that this particular cut not be made. As we see it, these funds simply became part of a large ending fund balance, instead of being out in communities all over the state providing services, wages, etc., as intended by the legislature.

This funding will provide much-needed relief to our facilities as well as the people they employ and the people they serve.

I urge you to support HB 12.

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MHCA... providing leadership and empowerment within the long term care continuum through education, advocacy, information and support to our members.

Increases to Service Providers

