



Please vote NO on House Bill 587

Blue Mountain Clinic does not support HB587. This bill bans the use of telemedicine for medical abortion. HB587 falsely implies that medical abortions provided via telemedicine are unsafe when in fact there is evidence showing otherwise. Evidence-based

research shows that medical abortion via telemedicine is just as safe as medication abortion via an in person visit. In fact, medical abortion has success rates of 95-99% and less than 0.4% of patients experience serious complications. At Blue Mountain Clinic we provide a supportive, patient-centered environment with trained counselors that support women's choices – but we know there are women who can't make it to the clinic and they deserve access to this same support, the same services, and the same standards of medical care that every other patient has. Although some have argued that telemedicine diminishes patient care, that is simply untrue. Meeting women where they are, with what they need *is* providing the best patient care.

Promotion of telemedicine in all aspects of healthcare is the future and is especially important when trying to provide comprehensive care in states such as Montana that are very rural. Telemedicine technology increases access to all types of health care, decreases costs, and improves health outcomes. HB587 interferes with safe, evidenced- based practice of medicine by targeting how a physician may distribute a specific medicine that is in the best interest of and choice of their patient. If HB587 is passed, it sets a dangerous precedent that allows for future restrictive legislation on telemedicine resulting in a decrease in access in numerous aspects of health care. Passing HB587 will leave Montana in the dark ages of a health care world that is constantly creating new technologies such as telemedicine to safely and effectively treat patients who would otherwise not receive health care services of all kinds. Blue Mountain Clinic seeks to improve health care access and we believe telemedicine is an important step in the right direction. We support physicians, not lawmakers, in practicing medicine.

HB587 serves to stigmatize abortion. Currently, 89% of counties in Montana have no abortion provider. Telemedicine and the benefits it offers for safe medical care around abortion needs to be available in rural Montana.

Lawmakers need to spend less time stigmatizing and restricting abortion, and more time on education of children, safety for women in abusive relationships, health care access through Medicaid expansion, mental health improvement initiatives, and public health programs for obesity. These are real health problems that need the time and attention of our lawmakers.

We are proud that Montana works to protect, not restrict, women's reproductive choices and health care decisions. HB 587 starts yet another attack on Montana women's' abilities to receive good medical care.

We urge you to vote NO on House Bill 587