

Mr. Chairman and committee members, my name is Anne Weber. I am currently employed as an independent laboratory consultant. I previously worked at the Montana Public Health Laboratory for 31 years, first as a microbiologist and later as the Laboratory Director for over 6 years. I am here to say that licensure of Clinical Laboratory professionals in Montana is effective in protecting the both the public health and individual health of all Montanans.

One example of critical work that is done by licensed laboratory professionals is the diagnosis of influenza. Influenza is a respiratory disease caused by a highly contagious virus, and some infected people will develop life-threatening complications. Laboratory diagnosis is important to the individual so they can receive appropriate treatment, and it is important to the public so they can be protected from further spread of the disease and from the serious complications. At the Public Health Laboratory, in addition to testing individuals for influenza, we analyze the virus itself to determine its variant classification. This further analysis protects public health by contributing to surveillance of flu activity and to vaccine development. All of this work is done in Montana by licensed Clinical Laboratory Professionals.

Montana licensure of laboratory professionals is critical to maintain competency standards for individual practitioners. Licensure protects both public health and individual health, and the Board of Clinical Laboratory Science Practitioners is necessary to oversee those competency standards. I urge you to continue the licensure of Clinical Laboratory Professionals in Montana.

Anne Weber
10/22/13

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS INTERIM
COMMITTEE 2013-14

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Exhibit No. 17