

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 29
INTRODUCED BY S. GALLUS

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REAFFIRMING THE LEGISLATURE'S COMMITMENT TO ENHANCING THE STATE'S CAPACITY TO IMPROVE CARE FOR MONTANA'S CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THROUGH STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY-BASED HEALTH SERVICES, HUMAN SERVICES, AND WORK-RELATED, SOCIAL, AND RECREATIONAL SERVICES AND PROGRAMS AND THROUGH IMPROVING THE VIABILITY OF THE PRIVATE-NONPROFIT CAREGIVER AND VENDOR NETWORK NECESSARY TO PROVIDE THOSE SERVICES AND ENDORSING THE PRINCIPLE THAT COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR CITIZENS SHOULD BE PROVIDED TO ACHIEVE THE GREATEST DEGREE OF QUALITY RESULTS, NORMALIZATION, AND MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITIES AS POSSIBLE.

WHEREAS, federal courts, personal conscience, and Montana custom have determined that it is a basic human right of individuals, children, and families with special needs to live in the least restrictive, most dignified, and most nurturing way possible; and

WHEREAS, when appropriate and safe, community-based social, recreational, health, and human services are provided to all individuals, including those with special needs; and

WHEREAS, consumer and family choice of services promotes cost-effective and flexible solutions for care while meeting the unique needs of individuals, children, and families with special needs; and

WHEREAS, recent studies have shown that strong not-for-profit business sectors are vital sources of local economic development; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, the not-for-profit sector was the fifth largest source of wages in Montana and 75% of not-for-profit corporation revenue came from health care, mental health care, and multipurpose human services corporations; and

WHEREAS, economic development in all business sectors is attracted to communities that have strong health networks and social, recreational, and human services; and

WHEREAS, the priorities of the Governor's Office of Economic Development include promoting Montana businesses, enabling economic development by increasing government responsiveness and efficiency, and providing an opportunity for all Montana citizens to share economic prosperity and a high quality of life in all regions of the state; and

WHEREAS, the Bush Administration's New Freedom Initiative promotes consumer and family choice in disability-related treatment, health care, and other basic community living decisions, allowing people with disabilities and their families to decide how best to plan, obtain, and sustain community-based services; and

WHEREAS, the Montana Mental Health Oversight Advisory Council has established guiding principles for creating a system of community-based care in Montana that rests on principles of recovery and resiliency, equity, access and satisfaction, cultural competency, community education and awareness, flexibility, and diversion; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Health Care Workforce Shortage's recommendations include those human services professions that are essential to the health care system by providing care, treatment, and support to children, families, and individuals with disabilities and special needs, including services to those with developmental disabilities, emotional disturbances, mental illness, and chemical dependency who may be served in community-based programs or in residential programs; and

WHEREAS, increasing the availability of innovative community-based social, recreational, health, and human services will improve all individuals' ability to use their strengths and resources to enhance their quality of life and their ability to manage their own lives and will be an important key to maximizing consumer health, successful functioning and normalization, and maximizing systemic fiscal efficiency and accountability; and

WHEREAS, a strong, healthy, private not-for-profit network and open market competition is necessary to achieve both consumer choice, fiscal efficiency, and accountability; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature directly affects the availability, direction, and success of these important services and programs through the appropriation of critical funds to state agencies.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That all branches of state government shall, through the Department of Public Health and Human Services, work towards the development and maintenance of a consistent and complete compendium of community-based services for all citizens, including individuals, children, and families with special needs, while recognizing the essential role of the individual, family, and community in planning for, providing, and purchasing the rich array of social, recreational, health care, and human services and other programs available.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be provided to the Governor and the Director of the Department of Public Health and Human Services.

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