

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

STEVE BULLOCK
GOVERNOR



MIKE COONEY
LT. GOVERNOR

November 24, 2017

The Honorable Corey Stapleton
Secretary of State
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Secretary Stapleton:

In accordance with the power vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Montana, I hereby veto House Bill 5 (HB 5), "AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE STATE INSURANCE COMMISSIONER TO APPLY FOR STATE INNOVATION WAIVERS; ESTABLISHING PUBLIC NOTICE AND HEARING REQUIREMENTS; PROVIDING RULEMAKING AUTHORITY; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE AND A TERMINATION DATE."

As elected officials, we should be working together to expand access to health care services in Montana. Section 1332 of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) permits Montana to apply for a State Innovation Waiver to pursue innovative strategies for providing residents with access to high quality, affordable health insurance while retaining the basic protections of the ACA. I am concerned that a two-day special session does not allow for a thoughtful consideration of how to achieve these important goals, and that as written HB 5 does not meet the basic requirements for Section 1332 authorizing legislation.

Testimony in support of HB 5 was contradictory to the plain language of the bill, and details of the proposal were not available for lawmakers, tribal representatives, and members of the public to evaluate. Without the proper research, actuarial analysis, required statutory provisions for federal approval, and public input, it would be premature to enact such legislation.

I called the special session for the limited purpose of balancing Montana's budget—HB 5 is unrelated to that work. The innovation waiver contemplated by HB 5 is a complex topic that deserves a thorough vetting during the legislature's regular 90-day biennial session.

For these reasons, I veto HB 5.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Bullock", written over a horizontal line.

STEVE BULLOCK
Governor

cc: Legislative Services Division
Scott Sales, President of the Senate
Austin Knudsen, Speaker of the House