

October 14, 2013
Economic Affairs Interim Committee (EAIC)
PO Box 201706
Helena, MT 59620-1706

Dear members of the EAIC:

As a licensed Respiratory Therapist from Great Falls, Montana, I want to express my endorsement for the continuation of state licensure for Montana respiratory therapy practitioners.

I appreciate the oversight that licensure provides. Licensure and the MBRC governing board offers the profession of respiratory therapy the ability to ensure that each licensed professional is held to the same standards of education, credentialing, and continuing education. There is also a system for support and accountability for those therapists that may be practicing beyond the Montana State license scope of practice as well as for those that may be troubled by addictions or criminal offenses that are affecting their ability to conduct themselves safely in a patient care setting. I trust that the Montana Board of Respiratory Care (MBRC) will advocate protecting our patients from unsafe practice. Licensure for respiratory therapy practitioners offers the ultimate system of checks and balances for patient safety. Please accept my endorsement for the continuation of licensure and recommend to the Montana legislature that licensure must continue.

Sincerely,

Jim Elstad RRT / RN

Licensed Montana Respiratory Therapist

Respiratory practitioners operate life support systems on some of our youngest & oldest Montanans. From preemies, to young trauma patients, to elderly patients struggling w/ COPD / pneumonia; our technical support is LIFE SAVING. 6 RT's serve on Mercy Flight here in Great Falls. Operating in the emergency transport & life support of critically ill Montanans.

PLEASE keep our profession licensed & accountable

Jim Elstad RRT RN