

February 8, 2023

Public Comment for House Bill 2 – Health & Human Services

HEART Fund

- “I wish to make public testimony on HB 2, the HEART Initiative.

I am completely in support of revenue from Marijuana sales to fund behavioral health, including substance addiction. The HEART initiative makes a lot of sense. Thank you! However, I think it is important for the committee to make note. Funds disbursed by the state to counties are often utilized at the county commissioner's discretion. I have been disheartened to learn that while other counties are valuing the work of homeless services and their efforts to fill the numerous gaps in behavioral health and substance abuse within the homeless population, funds sent to the Flathead County Commissioners will not be passed along to homeless services. I was further disheartened to learn that when our local detention center could not use the funds, (no space and difficulty hiring staff), as reported to me, the funds "were returned". Homeless services were never considered and would likely never be considered under the current Flathead County Commissioner's leadership. You will see some local governments working with their nonprofits and others, just not. For funds to be utilized for the greatest community outcomes, I believe strongly that all nonprofits should be considered, regardless of the county. Thank you for your time. For your reference, please click on this link regarding a public letter from the Flathead County Commissioners.

<https://dailyinterlake.com/news/2023/jan/21/county-commissioners-blame-shelters-homeless-consp/>”

-Tonya Horn

- “Hello, my name is Keith Blaylock, I live in Kalispell, MT. I do not support the HEART initiative, mainly because the funding that comes from taxes from the sale of recreational marijuana was supposed to be, promised to be, used for other purposes and it is being usurped by the governor for his personal reasons. This disingenuous action should not, must not, be rewarded. Thank you for NOT supporting the HEART initiative.”

-Keith Blaylock

- “Please support the HEART initiative as it would use some of the revenue from Marijuana sales to fund behavioral health, including substance abuse treatment.

We need to make investments in child and adult behavioral health, mental health, substance abuse because the state is facing a crisis.”

-Hillary Daily

- “I SUPPORT HB2 . This is a win-win situation to fund behavioral health.”

-Kathleen Ball