

January 26, 2023

Public Comment for House Bill 2 – Health & Human Services

General Public Comments

- “Please support this bill.”

-Ellen Childress

Medicaid Eligibility Rules

- “Opposing HB2, specifically the change to Medicaid eligibility rules

The proposed changes to Medicaid eligibility rules are harsh and unsupportable. In effect, they would dump ailing citizens or family members into the road, saying, “Tough!” Why would you do this? Do you think people get sick on purpose? This is unChristian and unethical. The Medicaid eligibility should be continuous and reliable. Moreover, these changes fall heavily on tribal communities, clearly designed to pull the rug out from under them. Over 43,000 citizens would suffer from these changes.

Try to remember you are elected to serve the citizens of Montana, not brutalize them.”

-Linda Schmitt

- “Hello, my name is Keith Blaylock, I live in Kalispell, MT. I oppose this bill as I don’t believe changing the Medicaid eligibility rules is appropriate considering it makes it easier to remove people from their health care, at a time when Medicaid eligibility should become easier. DPHHS should have continuous eligibility restored. Thousands of Montana’s citizens should never be blatantly removed from their health care.

Thank you for NOT SUPPORTING this legislation.”

-Keith Blaylock

- “With this change, the DPHHS and the Governor have made it easier to kick people off their health care by changing the Medicaid eligibility rules, which will disproportionately affect Tribal health care services

The DPHHS needs to restore continuous eligibility in lieu of this massive infusion of red tape for those just scraping to get by. It's unconscionable and shows that apparently our Governor has never lived paycheck to paycheck. Gianforte is out of touch.

The current plan for changing eligibility is irresponsible – and could kick 43,000 Montanans off their health care”

-Kathryn Kern

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- “It is irresponsible to change Medicaid eligibility rules and remove coverage for 43,000 people.”

-Paula Darko Hensler

- “With this change, the DPHHS and the Governor have made it easier to kick people off their health care by changing the Medicaid eligibility rules, which will disproportionately affect Tribal health care services.”

-Bonita J Reishus

- “Funding for Tribal Communities and Members:

Their current plan for changing eligibility is irresponsible – and could kick 43,000 Montanans off their health care.”

-Terri L Nelson

Medicaid Enrollment

- “I stand in support of HB 2 in regard to Medicaid enrollment.”

-Tirza Asbell

Disability Services

- “My organization, Opportunity Resources in Missoula, MT, has had to cope with a staffing decrease of 65 people in the past 2.5 years due to the pandemic and the inability to pay them a living wage. This has caused ORI to have to close one congregate living site altogether and limited our ability to provide new services to individuals with disabilities on the waiting list.

We are grateful that a rate increase is being considered from the governor's budget, but frankly 4% is not enough to make a difference with being able to hire adequate staffing levels. As a 31-year veteran of providing employment services and enhancing the independence of persons with disabilities, I ask that you consider fully funding the full rate increase called for in the rate study that was recently published.”

-Larry Dill