

November 7, 2017

Montana Office of Rural Health | AHEC Program Office
P.O. Box 170520
Bozeman, MT 59717

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to recognize November 16, 2017 as “National Rural Health Day” in the state of Montana.

I appreciate the continued hard work of the Montana Office of Rural Health and the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health over the last several years. Thanks to their efforts, we have raised awareness about rural healthcare needs, communicated available healthcare options, and continued developing solutions to persisting rural healthcare challenges.

Rural hospitals and providers are the backbone of our healthcare system in Montana and are essential to our state’s public health.

This is why I have pushed many initiatives to make healthcare more accessible to all Montanans. The HELP Act, which received bipartisan support in both houses of the Montana Legislature, provided low-cost health insurance to Montanans who make too much money for traditional Medicaid, but too little to receive subsidies on the health insurance exchange. As a result of the HELP Act, we were able to begin HELP-Link, which is a free workforce program that connects Medicaid enrollees with high quality workforce training, employment services and job openings in local communities.

Furthermore, I received bipartisan support to expand the WWAMII Medical Education Program, which makes public medical education available to Montana students and encourages them to serve in rural areas. I also started the Office of Indian Health under the Department of Health and Human Services to address healthcare issues in rural American Indian populations. I continue to search for ways to address health concerns in the state of Montana.

I encourage all Montanans to recognize our rural communities and acknowledge November 16, 2017 as “National Rural Health Day” in the state of Montana.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Bullock', with a stylized flourish at the end.

STEVE BULLOCK
Governor