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Montana Citizens for Accessible and Affordable Rural Health Care

I represent concerned citizens living in rural areas and below the poverty line who are opposed to the inaccessibility and expensiveness of quality health care facilities in Montana. We support the building and maintenance of health care facilities for these citizens and ways to make health care more affordable for people who are below the poverty line.

In Montana, there are approximately 65 health care facilities in approximately 50 cities spread across the state.

There is 147,165 square miles of land area in Montana.

This means that each health care facility must cover about 2,300 square miles of total land area. A car traveling at 75 mph, the interstate speed limit, would take a little under an hour to reach the nearest facility. But that doesn't take into account that most of the health care facilities are in the same city. Some families in Eastern Montana may have to travel 1.5 to 2 hours to reach a good facility. In rural emergencies, that is way too long.

There are 957,861 people in the state of Montana.

This means that each facility in the state must be able to take care of approximately 14,740 people. Granted that the entire state does not become ill and have to go into the hospital at the same time, but this just shows that there are obviously not enough health care facilities in the State to take care of all these people. More facilities should be built and spread out around the state and in rural communities in order to reach all the people it can.

Also, in Montana, 14.6% of the population are below the poverty line and 17.1% of the population do not have health insurance. With the rising costs of health care all across the United States, these people are not able to afford the health care they need.

The above statements show just how sparse the health care facilities in Montana are. As Montana citizens, we need to rise up and take care of the farmer and the rancher who do not live around a large city. We need to make sure that everyone can afford health care and not just the fortunate few. By making sure that everyone is able to receive the health care that they deserve, we are making sure that we always have somewhere to go when we are ill, in an emergency, or having our first child.

I will support legislation that makes health care in Montana more affordable and accessible to all of Montana's citizens.

Christina M. Pezzarossi

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