

2019: BULLOCK BROUGHT REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS TOGETHER TO EXPAND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE FOR 90,000 MONTANANS

Bullock Signed A Bill Thursday To Continue Montana's Medicaid Expansion Program For Another Six Years, The Bill's Sponsor Was Republican Ed Buttrely.

“Gov. Steve Bullock signed a bill Thursday to continue Montana's Medicaid expansion program for another six years, as long as federal funding continues. He was joined at the signing ceremony by bill sponsor Republican Rep. Ed Buttrely and Democratic Rep. Mary Caferro, who sponsored a separate bill that did not pass.” [Associated Press, [5/9/19](#)]

Associated Press: The Bill Provided Health Insurance To About 95,000

Low-Income Adults. “The bill continues the program, which began in 2016, and provides health insurance to about 95,000 low-income adults. It would have ended on June 30 if lawmakers had not reached an agreement. He also held ceremonial signings for other bills to lower health insurance and prescription drug costs.” [Associated Press, [5/9/19](#)]

Republicans Joined Democrats In Support Of The Medicaid Expansion Bill. “Five Republican senators joined all 20 Senate Democrats in support of HB658, while 25 Republicans — including some who have previously supported Medicaid expansion — voted against it.” [KPAX, [4/11/19](#)]

The Medicaid Expansion Bill Was “Bipartisan.” “HB658, one of the biggest bills before the 2019 Legislature, passed the House late last month on a bipartisan vote and appeared headed toward passage until this week’s stumble in the Senate.” [KPAX, [4/11/19](#)]

On April 18, 2019, Republicans And Democrats In The House Voted To Expand The Medicaid Program. [Montana House, HB 658, 61-35-4, [4/18/19](#)]

On April 16, 2019, Republicans And Democrats In The Senate Voted To Expand The Medicaid Program. [Montana Senate, HB 658, 28-22, [4/16/19](#)]

2015: BULLOCK BROUGHT REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS TOGETHER TO EXPAND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE FOR 70,000 MONTANANS...

Bullock Signed A Bill To Expand Medicaid Eligibility To About 70,000 People.

“After several years and a long, bumpy road to passage, the governor signed a bill into law Wednesday to expand Medicaid eligibility to about 70,000 low-income Montanans. Democratic Gov. Steve Bullock signed the Montana Health and Economic Livelihood Partnership Act into law in the Capitol rotunda as hundreds of people cheered.” [Associated Press, [4/29/15](#)]

Headline: AP: “Bullock Signs Medicaid Expansion Into Law.” [Associated Press, [4/29/15](#)]

The Plan Was Introduced By Republican, Ed Buttrey. “The compromise proposal was introduced by Republican Sen. Ed Buttrey of Great Falls in March after lawmakers defeated Bullock's plan.” [Associated Press, [4/29/15](#)]

Republicans And Democrats In The Senate Voted To Expand Medicaid. On April 18, 2015, Republicans and Democrats in the senate voted to expand Medicaid. [Montana Senate, SB 405, 28-21-1, [4/18/15](#)]

Republicans And Democrats In The House Voted To Expand Medicaid. On April 11, 2015, Republicans and Democrats in the house voted to expand Medicaid. [Montana House, SB 405, 54-42-4, [4/11/15](#)]

...AND HELPED SAVE OUR RURAL HOSPITALS

Montana Health Care Foundation: Montana's 2015 Bipartisan Medicaid Helped Rural Hospitals Keep “Their Doors Open.” “According to two independent analyses released today, Montana's 2015 bipartisan Medicaid legislation has saved more than \$36 million* in the state's budget and helped more than 65,000 adults access preventive health care services. [...] Helped rural hospitals keep their doors open: Hospitals in Medicaid expansion states are six times less likely to close. Since more Montanans have insurance than ever before, uncompensated care costs for rural hospitals and clinics decreased by \$103 million (44.9 percent) in 2016 alone, and hospitals became more profitable.” [Montana Health Care Foundation, [6/18/18](#)]

Montana Business Quarterly: Medicaid Expansion Created “Over 1,000 Jobs In Rural Regions Of Montana” And Helped “Alleviate Some Of The Issues Facing Rural Hospitals.” “In 2015, the Montana Legislature passed the HELP Act, which expanded Medicaid for a number of low-income residents in the state. [...] According to the National Rural Health Association, since 2010 almost 100 rural hospitals have closed their doors across the nation. More troubling is the statistic that nationally nearly 700 rural care centers are considered financially vulnerable and at a high risk of closure. The addition of over 1,000 jobs in rural regions of Montana, as well as the additional income generated, will help alleviate some of the issues facing rural hospitals.” [Montana Business Quarterly, [9/30/19](#)]

Supporters Of Bullock's Medicaid Expansion Bill Said It Would Help Keep Rural Hospitals Open. “Gov. Steve Bullock signed a bill Thursday to continue Montana's Medicaid expansion program for another six years, as long as federal funding continues. [...] It's estimated the Medicaid expansion program could bring about \$720 million in federal funding into the state in each of the next two fiscal years. Supporters said the program created jobs, saved lives, helped keep rural hospitals open and reduced uncompensated care for hospitals, which reduces cost-shifting to insured residents.” [Associated Press, [5/9/19](#)]

BULLOCK WAS PRAISED BY MONTANA'S HEALTH CARE WORKERS AND HOSPITALS FOR TAKING, QUOTE, "SWIFT" AND "DECISIVE" ACTION TO SAVE LIVES

Billings Gazette: Byrd Column: Montana Health Care Workers Association Said Bullock's Leadership Would Slow Down The Spread Of The Coronavirus. "In a public health crisis, we expect our leaders are making decisions based on expert recommendations and scientific evidence. The Montana Nurses Association (MNA), as the organization for professional registered nurses in Montana, supports and will promote the shelter in place directive issued by Gov. Bullock this past Thursday. His administration's latest move to slow the spread of COVID-19 will assist in slowing down the spread of this communicable disease." [Bozeman Daily Chronicle, Vicky Byrd Column, [4/1/20](#)]

President, Montana Hospital Association: Bullock "Moved Decisively To Thwart The Spread Of COVID-19," And Took A "Bold Step To Protect Montanans" By Implementing A 14-Day Quarantine For Travelers. Rich Rasmussen, President and CEO of the Montana Hospital Association wrote: "Recently, the Montana Hospital Association asked Governor Steve Bullock to issue a stay-at-home order to stop the virus' spread and give public health and our hospitals a fighting chance to defeat the virus. After considerable consultation with public health, business and political leaders, the Governor moved decisively to thwart the spread of COVID-19 and issued his stay-at-home directive. Just days later, Gov. Bullock took another bold step to protect Montanans: a 14-day quarantine on travelers, in part to stop those fleeing stay-at-home directives in other states from coming to Montana and further spreading the virus across our state." [Montana Standard, Rich Rasmussen Op-Ed, [4/6/20](#)]

President, Montana Hospital Association: "Social Distancing Strategies To Slow Down The Spread" Saved "Lives." Rich Rasmussen, President and CEO of the Montana Hospital Association wrote: "The risks are real. Epidemiologists have estimated the virus will attack 30 to 40 percent of us, and five percent of those cases will be severe enough to require hospitalization. Left unmitigated, that could equate to 15,000 – 20,000 hospitalizations in Montana. For a state with just shy of 2,000 hospital beds and approximately 200 ICU beds, it becomes clear why social distancing strategies to slow down the spread can save lives." [Montana Standard, Rich Rasmussen Op-Ed, [4/6/20](#)]

Chairman, Riverstone Healthcare: Bullock's Executive Orders Helped To Reduce The Spread Of COVID-19 Disease And Saved "Lives Of Montanans." "Chairman, RiverStone Healthcare wrote: "By keeping people apart, the county health restrictions, which soon afterward were applied statewide by executive orders from Gov. Steve Bullock, are helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19 disease. The restrictions are the best way to reduce the risk that Montanans will get sick, and thus to save lives of Montanans. Some people of all ages who contract COVID-19 have become seriously, even fatally, ill." [Billings Gazette, John Dorr Opinion, [4/13/20](#)]

VIDEO: Bullock Secured 50,000 Face Masks For Health Professionals. “Today Governor Steve Bullock extends closures for schools and restaurants through April 10. In order to slow the spread of COVID-19 here in Montana and that is not all. Some of the other measures include securing 50,000 facemask for health professionals and new measures to help local governments follow social distance and guidelines. Governor Bullock said yesterday alone, about 25% of our COVID-19 positive population in Montana. He expects those numbers to increase. But he also says it's the actions we're taking today and in the future that will lessen the spread in Montana and part of that is through cooperation of local government.” [KULR, 4/7/20] (FACE MASK 15 VIDEO)

Billings Gazette Editorial: “We Could Have Had Many, Many More [Deaths And Positive Cases] Without The Public-Health Precautions Mandated By The Governor And Observed By The Public.” “The precautionary measures are absolutely justified. We have had 14 deaths and 442 reported cases in the state. We could have had many, many more without the public-health precautions mandated by the governor and observed by the public. As the governor said, our effectiveness in limiting the incidence of this terrible disease in the state so far is due to people’s common sense and cooperation.” [Billings Gazette, Editorial, [4/24/20](#)]

Yellowstone County Official Said Bullock’s Stay-At-Home Order Slowed The Spread Of COVID-19 In Montana's Most Populous County. “He stated that the order from mid-March shutting down dining areas, bars, casinos, churches and other locations slowed the spread of COVID-19 in Montana's most populous county. ‘It's because of the actions we've all taken that we have managed to not overwhelm our health care system,’ he said.” [Billings Gazette, [4/23/20](#)]

Montana Medical Association: “Because Of Montana’s Aggressive Approach Of Shutting Everything Down Early In The Pandemic, We Are In The Fortuitous Position Of Having A Very Low Viral Burden In The State.” ““Because of Montana’s aggressive approach of shutting everything down early in the pandemic, we are in the fortuitous position of having a very low viral burden in the state. With that being said, I feel assured that a cautious, vigilant, and step wise approach to opening up our healthcare, commerce, and education sectors could be attempted. Keep in mind that for every two steps forward we might need to take a step back, but it is in everyone’s best interest that we try,’ Dr. Marc Mentel, president of the Montana Medical Association, said.” [Office of Governor Bullock, press release, [4/23/20](#)]

Billings Gazette Editorial: Montana Can “Now Contemplate Loosening Restrictions Is Because The State Acted Quickly, And People By An Large Responded Well And Respected The Rules.” “As he pointed out, the reason we can now contemplate loosening restrictions is because the state acted quickly, and people by an large responded well and respected the rules.” [Billings Gazette, Editorial, [4/24/20](#)]

BULLOCK SAID THAT BECAUSE MONTANA ACTED AGGRESSIVELY AND EARLY, COMPARED TO OTHER STATES IN THE COUNTRY, IT COULD REOPEN EARLIER

Helena IR: “Bullock Said That Because Montana Acted Aggressively And Early Compared To Other States In The Country In Shutting Things Down, It Is Now Able To Reopen Earlier.” “In a call with reporters Wednesday, Bullock said that because Montana acted aggressively and early compared to other states in the country in shutting things down, it is now able to reopen earlier.” [Helena Independent Record, [4/24/20](#)]

VIDEO: KTVH: ANCR: “Bullock Says Montana's Early Actions To Flatten The Curve Of Coronavirus Cases Have Now Brought The State To A Point Where They Can Begin To Relax Some Of The Restrictions.” “ANCR: Governor Steve Bullock says Montana's early actions to flatten the curve of Coronavirus cases have now brought the state to a point where they can begin to relax some of the restrictions. But before the start of phase one reopening this weekend, Bullock said people will still need to take actions to maintain that progress.” [KTVH, 4/23/20] (VIDEO)

VIDEO: BULLOCK: “This Has Not Been The Result Of The Actions Of A Few, But Rather The Effort Of All Of Us As Montanans. In So Many Ways We Have Stood Together In The Face Of This Crisis.” “ANCR: Bullock said it was only through the work and sacrifices of all Montanans that made the reopening viable at this time. BULLOCK: This has not been the result of the actions of a few, but rather the effort of all of us as Montanans. In so many ways we have stood together in the face of this crisis.” [KTVH, 4/22/20] (VIDEO)

VIDEO: Bullock: “I Recognize Through All Of This That Montanans Have Always Had An Independent Spirit. Yet At The Same Time We've Never Shied Away From Looking Out For Our Neighbors.” ANCR: But first across the state tonight, Governor Steve Bullock makes a major move to help protect Montana from COVID-19. BULLOCK: I recognize through all of this that Montanans have always had an independent spirit. Yet at the same time we've never shied away from looking out for our neighbors. We've always made sacrifices for the overall good of our communities.” [KTVQ, 3/26/20] (VIDEO)

VIDEO: Bullock: “This Has Not Been The Result Of The Actions Of A Few, But Rather The Effort Of All Of Us As Montanans. In So Many Ways We Have Stood Together In The Face Of This Crisis.” BULLOCK: [00:02:09] “This has not been the result of the actions of a few, but rather the effort of all of us as Montanans. In so many ways we have stood together in the face of this crisis. Now even though the stay at home order is being partially lifted, Governor Bullock stressed This is not a time to celebrate. during phase one of the reopen plan, people are still asking you social distancing, practice good hygiene not gather in groups of 10 or more and wear a mask

at grocery stores. The governor's travel restrictions from other states will also now remain in effect." [KBZK, 4/23/20] (VIDEO)

MONTANA HAD SOME OF THE LOWEST NUMBERS OF CORONAVIRUS CASES IN THE UNITED STATES

Montana Was One Of The States With The Least Amount Of COVID-19 Cases.

According to the CDC, Montana had 445 cases of coronavirus, the second lowest number of cases in a state in the country. [CDC, Cases of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) in the U.S., accessed [4/26/20](#)]

VIDEO: ANCR: COVID-19 Cases Were Falling In The State And Montana Would Begin To Reopen. "ANCR: The rebound from COVID-19 restrictions is set to begin in Montana. Governor Bullock announcing today that parts of the state will begin to reopen this week. New COVID-19 infection rates are falling in the state. The state recorded just two new cases today, one in Missoula and one in Yellowstone County." [KTVH, 4/22/20] (VIDEO)

VIDEO: ANCR: "Montana Has The Lowest Number Of Confirmed Cases And COVID-19 Fatalities Per Capita For The Nation." "ANCR: The governor's travel restriction from other states will also remain in effect. Montana has the lowest number of confirmed cases and COVID-19 fatalities per capita for the nation." [KTVH, 4/22/20] (VIDEO)

VIDEO: KBZK: ANCR: "Montana Has The Lowest Number Of Confirmed Cases And COVID Fatalities Per Capita In The US In The Entire Nation." "ANCR: Montana has the lowest number of confirmed cases and COVID fatalities per capita in the US in the entire nation. Governor Bullock said it was only through the work and sacrifices of all Montanans that the reopening is possible at this time." [KBZK, 4/23/20] (VIDEO)

BULLOCK'S LEADERSHIP WAS ALLOWING US TO CAREFULLY REOPEN OUR ECONOMY WHILE PROTECTING MONTANANS' HEALTH AND SAFETY

Billings Gazette: Editorial: Bullock "Mapped Out Some Sensible Metrics For When To Begin A Phased-In Rollback Of Some Restrictions, Including The Stay-At-Home Order." "On Friday, the governor mapped out some sensible metrics for when to begin a phased-in rollback of some restrictions, including the stay-at-home order. He said that Adjutant General Matthew Quinn of the Montana National Guard has started a process to plan for a gradual re-opening of the state, based on military strategic planning principles. Specifically, Bullock said he would need to see two weeks of sustained reductions in daily COVID-19 case growth, as well as sufficient testing capability and hospital capacity, to set things in motion. Fair enough. There's no point in rushing to re-open and undoing weeks of sacrifice." [Billings Gazette, Editorial, [4/19/20](#)]

BULLOCK ANNOUNCED A PLAN TO REOPEN MONTANA'S ECONOMY

April 2020: Bullock Put Out A Plan To Reopen Montana. [Office of the Governor, Reopening the Big Sky, [4/23/20](#)]

April 22, 2020: Bullock Announced The State Would Enter The First Phase Of A Staggered Reopening. “Gov. Steve Bullock said Wednesday that Montana will enter the first phase of a staggered reopening of the state in the coming days, which includes lifting a statewide stay-at-home order and some of the restrictions that closed schools, restaurants, bars, retail stores and more. Those measures were taken to slow the spread of the coronavirus, which has sickened 439 and killed 14 Montanans since the first cases were diagnosed here nearly six weeks ago. The number of new cases added each day has been on a downward trajectory over the last two weeks. That was one of the metrics, along with sufficient testing ability and hospital capacity, that Bullock said he needed to see to start a phased reopening.” [Helena Independent Record, [4/22/20](#)]

Montana Chamber Of Commerce “Appreciate[ed] [Bullock’s] Leadership.

“Governor Steve Bullock today announced a gradual and phased reopening of the state beginning Sunday for individuals, and extending to businesses on Monday. [...] ‘The Montana business community appreciates the Governor’s leadership over the course of the COVID19 pandemic. The Montana Chamber of Commerce supports a phased approach to re-opening our economy, while still maintaining health standards and containing the spread of COVID-19. Montana businesses are capable of being flexible and partnering with our colleagues and employees to address the challenges that this may pose, and are eager to open our doors once again,’ Todd O’Hair, President/CEO of the Montana Chamber of Commerce, said.” [Office of Governor Bullock, press release, [4/23/20](#)]

MPR: Montana Hospital Association “Fully” Supported Bullock’s Phased-In Approach To Rebooting The State’s Economy. “The Montana Hospital Association says it fully supports the Bullock administration’s phased-in approach to rebooting the state’s economy. The hospitals represented by the association, meanwhile are now outlining their plans to resume elective surgical procedures.” [Montana Public Radio, [4/22/20](#)]

MPR: “Bullock Consulted Closely With Montana’s Health Care Industry Before Announcing His Intent To Lift The State’s Stay At Home Order, According To Montana Hospital Association.” “Gov. Steve Bullock consulted closely with Montana’s health care industry before announcing his intent to lift the state’s stay at home order, according to Montana Hospital Association President and CEO Rich Rasmussen. ‘There has been a lot of counsel and a lot of collaboration going back and forth.’” [Montana Public Radio, [4/22/20](#)]

Bullock Worked With Business And Public Health Experts To How The State’s

Economy Could Be “Re-Opened While Keeping People Safe And Avoiding Another Outbreak Of Coronavirus.” “The governor said he’s been working with business leaders and public health experts to determine how the state’s economy could be re-opened while keeping people safe and avoiding another outbreak of coronavirus.” [Associated Press, [4/17/20](#)]

VIDEO: ANCR: “Governor Bullock Said The Phase Reopening Is Designed To Mitigate The Risk Of COVID-19 Resurgence While Protecting Vulnerable Populations.” “ANCR: While infection rates are falling, the virus continues to claim lives. Tooele county reported its six related deaths this morning and Flathead county it's second to bringing the total number of deaths in the state from the virus to 14. Montana's phase reopening begins on Sunday that is when the stay at home order will be lifted and places of worship can become operational again with reduced capacity. Governor Bullock said the phase reopening is designed to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 resurgence while protecting vulnerable populations. During phase one People are still asked to use social distancing. Practice good hygiene not gather in groups of 10 or more and wear a mask at grocery stores.” [KTVH, 4/22/20] (VIDEO)

VIDEO: ANCR: “Montana Governor Steve Bullock Unveils One Of The Most Ambitious Coronavirus Reopen Plans In The Nation.” “ANCR: Montana Governor Steve Bullock unveils one of the most ambitious Coronavirus reopen plans in the nation, what he's proposing coming up. According to Governor Bullock on May 7 schools across the state of Montana have the option of reopening.” [KBZK, 4/23/20] (VIDEO)

VIDEO: KBZK: ANCR: “Bullock Said The Plan Is Designed To Mitigate The Risk Of COVID-19 Resurgence While Protecting Vulnerable Populations.” ANCR: [00:01:42] “All right, thank you very much for your time now. 631. Montana will begin a phased in reopening of the state beginning next week as COVID-19 restrictions are gradually lifted. Governor Steve Bullock said the plan is designed to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 resurgence while protecting vulnerable populations.” [KBZK, 4/23/20] (VIDEO)

VIDEO: KFBB: ANCR: Bullock “Established A Coronavirus Relief Fund Task Force To Provide Guidance And Relief On How To Use The \$1.2 Billion Appropriate To Montana.” “ANCR: Well in Montana governor Bullock has established a Coronavirus Relief Fund task force to provide guidance and relief on how to use the \$1.2 billion appropriate to Montana through the federal cares act. Well, the funds are in place to assist workers, businesses and sectors of the Montana economy impacted by COVID-19. In a release from Governor Bullock’s office, it says 26 Montanans representing various industries have been selected for the task force and over the next two weeks, they'll examine all economic sectors to get funds out quickly and responsibly.” [KFBB, 4/15/20] (VIDEO)