

## **BHAM Montana Legislative Update – February 9, 2025**

The Legislators work for the people of Montana. It's imperative that you stand up and make your voice heard!

We're still getting reports that federal sites for loans, grants and funding are still have outages. If you experience an outage in Medicaid, SAMHSA, or a CMS site, please email [info@bhamt.org](mailto:info@bhamt.org) asap so we can look into it.

To participate in any of the committee hearings, click this link and sign up:  
<https://www.legmt.gov/participate/>

**You can review all of the bills BHAM is tracking [HERE](#)**

### **Bills we're watching:**

#### **Behavioral Health Services for Future Generations (BHSFG)**

There will be a work group meeting in Part B Budget Committee on Tuesday, Feb 11<sup>th</sup>, 8am to 12 pm, to look more closely at financial details around the BHSFG recommendations. BHAM will be at the hearing, but no public comment is scheduled for this meeting.

#### **Children's and Families Services Division (CFSD)**

A zero-based budgeting exercise for CFSD will be held in Part B Budget Committee from Wednesday, Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday, Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>, from 8am to 12 pm each day. Foster program and adoption providers should come and be ready to offer public comment on Thursday, Feb. 13<sup>th</sup> and Friday, Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>. Shelter care providers should also be present to emphasize the need for rate reimbursement increases for shelter care. Although it is not a Medicaid service, it is a very important part of the continuum of care for children in the system.

#### **Medicaid Rate Reimbursement:**

There are two bills we're working on for rate reimbursements to Medicaid providers. The 2023 Legislative Session approved \$339M to bring Medicaid rates up to the Guidehouse rate study guidelines. Unfortunately, those guidelines were based on 2020 costs for Medicaid providers. In the last five years since the 2020 costs were studied, inflation and personnel costs have climbed dramatically and providers are once again well-below the cost of delivering the care. Urgent action is needed this session.

1. [HB419](#) (Bedey) (formerly [LC4190](#) then LC821) **HB419 will be heard in Health and Human Services on Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>**. This bill will allow DPHHS to review cost reports for Medicaid providers in senior and long-term care, mental health, substance use disorder and intellectual developmentally disabled programs

every other year. Medicaid providers are already 5 years behind costs in reimbursement. **BHAM strongly supports this bill and encourages advocacy efforts to move it forward with the understanding that cost reporting adjustments need to occur every two years.**

2. LC2035 (not yet drafted) from Representative Caferro, would allow for an inflationary factor to be introduced into statute for all Medicaid providers, similar to the inflationary factor already in statute for physicians who accept Medicaid. This bill is not yet scheduled for hearing. **BHAM strongly supports this bill and encourages advocacy efforts to move it forward.**

### **Medicaid Expansion:**

1. [HB245](#) from Senator Buttrey will be heard on the House floor for third reading on Monday, Feb. 10, 2025. **BHAM strongly supports this bill and encourages advocacy efforts to move it forward.**
2. [HB230](#) from Representative Caferro has been tabled in committee.
3. [SB62](#) from Senator Glimm proposes the phase out of Medicaid Expansion over with no new members being approved. This bill was heard on January 22<sup>nd</sup> in the Senate Public Health, Welfare, and Safety Committee. Numerous opponents spoke against this bill and no proponents spoke in favor. Additional hearings are not yet scheduled for this bill. **BHAM strongly opposes this bill and encourages advocacy efforts to oppose it.**
4. [SB199](#), from Senators Trebas and Emmrich, proposes complicated additional requirements and taxes for Medicaid Expansion. Senator Buttrey spoke eloquently when introducing his HB245 about how unnecessary these types of bills were for the program. This bill will be heard Monday in the Senate Public Health, Welfare and Safety Committee. Additional hearings are not yet scheduled for this bill. **BHAM strongly opposes this bill and encourages advocacy efforts to oppose it.**