



PROCLAMATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS OF THE MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WHEREAS, in 2020, Montana experienced in COVID-19 the most severe pandemic in a century; and

WHEREAS, as of March 13, 2021, approximately 102,000 Montanans had been sickened by COVID and more than 4,500 people had been hospitalized by the pandemic, and approximately 1,400 Montanans had died from the disease; and

WHEREAS, many others diagnosed with COVID-19 have suffered lingering medical issues; and

WHEREAS, Montana hospitals have been at or near capacity during the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Montana's health care providers have been called upon to work under conditions far more challenging and stressful than normal during this pandemic, including the fear and uncertainty of a heightened risk of infection; worry that they may carry COVID-19 into their homes and infect loved ones; a severely limited supply of personal protective equipment; quickly evolving public health recommendations and protocols from local leadership, medical and public health experts, and political leaders; unusually high and increasing demands to work longer hours as their colleagues become sick or are quarantined; exposure to the physical and emotional strain of treating patients during a major health crisis; providing compassionate end-of-life care to patients facing their final moments without the comfort of in-person friends or families; and balancing their commitment to help others, which likely led them to choose health care as a profession, with the understandable commitment to protect themselves and their loved ones; and

WHEREAS, our health care workers have stepped up in countless ways, from physicians and nurses to first responders, to environmental services, facilities staff, chaplains, medical technicians, and the dedicated leaders working behind the scenes; and

WHEREAS, health care workers have responded exceedingly well to the pandemic by showing up, putting in long hours, rapidly adapting the ways in which they provide care, revising schedules, embracing telehealth, and even repurposing facilities or creating improvised personal protective equipment; and

WHEREAS, health care workers have continued to demonstrate compassion and maintain a brave front despite the fears they may harbor; and

WHEREAS, some nurses, doctors, and caregivers have paid the price of love with their own health and death; and

WHEREAS, whether they were conscious of it or not, our health care workers' choice testified to a belief that it is better to live a shorter life serving others than a longer one resisting that call; and

WHEREAS, in many communities, Montanans have stood at their windows or doorsteps to applaud health care workers in gratitude and awe; and

WHEREAS, our health care workers are the saints next door, who have awakened something important in our hearts; and

WHEREAS, as Pope Francis recently said of all health care workers, "They are the antibodies to the virus of indifference. They remind us that our lives are a gift and we grow by giving of ourselves, not preserving ourselves but losing ourselves in service."

NOW, THEREFORE, THE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS OF THE MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA HEREBY PROCLAIMS: That, WE return the love of Montana health care workers by honoring the workers and offering the highest praise and deepest gratitude for their heroic actions during this public health crisis.

Dated March 16, 2021

Rep. Kim Abbott, HD 83 Helena
 Rep. Laurie Bishop HD 60 Livingston
 Rep. Alice Buckley HD 62 Bozeman
 Rep. Mary Caferro HD 81 Helena
 Rep. Willis Curdy HD 98 Missoula
 Rep. Mary Ann Dunwell HD 84 Helena
 Rep. Rob Ferris-Olsen HD 79 Missoula
 Rep. Dave Fern HD 5 Whitefish
 Rep. Tom France HD 94 Missoula
 Rep. Moffie Funk HD 82 Helena
 Rep. Jim Hamilton HD 61 Bozeman
 Rep. Derek Harvey HD 76 Butte
 Rep. Donavan Hawk HD 76 Butte
 Rep. Denise Hayman HD 66 Bozeman
 Rep. Jessica Karjala HD 48 Billings
 Rep. Jim Keane HD 73 Butte
 Rep. Kathy Kelker HD 47 Billings

Rep. Connie Keogh HD 91 Missoula
 Rep. Emma Kerr-Carpenter HD 49 Billings
 Rep. Kelly Kortum HD 65 Bozeman
 Rep. Marilyn Marler HD 90 Missoula
 Rep. Sara Novak HD 77 Anaconda
 Rep. Andrea Olsen HD 100 Missoula
 Rep. Tyson Runningwolf HD 16 Browning
 Rep. Frank Smith HD 31 Poplar
 Rep. Ed Stafman HD 62 Bozeman
 Rep. Sharon Stewart Peregoy HD 42 Crow Agency
 Rep. Katie Sullivan HD 89 Missoula
 Rep. Danny Tenenbaum HD 95 Missoula
 Rep. Mark Thane HD 99 Missoula
 Rep. Marvin Weatherwax Jr. HD 15 Browning
 Rep. Rynalea Whiteman Pena HD 41 Lame Deer
 Rep. Jonathan Windy Boy HD 32 Box Elder