



THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES
OF THE FLATHEAD NATION

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A People of Vision

A Confederation of the Salish,
Pend d' Oreille
and Kootenai Tribes

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October 12, 2015

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell, Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave SW
Washington DC 20201

Re: **Support letter for Section 1115 Demonstration Waiver to implement the Montana Health and Economic Livelihood Partnership (HELP) program**

Dear Secretary Burwell:

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes appreciate the opportunity we received during your visit to the Flathead Nation in August 2015. It is so important for federal officials to visit Indian Country and come to their own understanding of our needs. As was discussed during your visit, the U. S. Department of Public Health and Human Services approved the wavier needed to implement the expansion of the Montana Medicaid program to include adults.

During the recent tribal consultation held by the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, we learned of the intricacies of the Section 1115 Demonstration Waiver, exemptions and alternative benefits plan that were being proposed in order to implement the Health and Economic Livelihood Partnership (HELP) program outlined in Senate Bill 405.

The expansion of Medicaid in Montana will be of great benefit to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. Under our self-designed health care system, we understand the impacts of those that remain uninsured, not only to our health care system but to the personal health of individuals. We work diligently each day to explore alternative resources for those seeking our services on the Flathead Indian reservation. Expanding health coverage through Medicaid to those who need it most is vitally important to the people we serve and the effective implementation of the business model Tribal Health Department (THD) is building.

The CSKT has actively supported Medicaid expansion in Montana. Tribal Council members and the THD staff have participated from day one. We attended every legislative hearing, offering important testimony to our state legislative leaders about not only the effects of a lack of health

coverage but also offering information that we believe is helpful to their understanding about how Indians access health care across Indian Country.

On behalf of the Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribes, I respectfully request your expeditious review and approval of Montana's 1115 Demonstration Waiver.

Sincerely,



Vernon Finley
Chairman

S. Kevin Howlett, Department Head, CSKT Tribal Health