



Montana Nonprofit Association

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March 12, 2020

Governor Steve Bullock
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620-0801

Dear Governor Bullock,

Montana Nonprofit Association (MNA) appreciates your thoughtful and proactive response to the threat of coronavirus in Montana. On behalf of more than 2200 nonprofit employers in Montana, I offer some insights from several of Montana's nonprofit leaders:

- Nonprofits, particularly service providers, are finding it necessary to adapt quickly to new operating requirements internally while communicating with and serving Montana's most vulnerable people in communities across the state.
- Human services nonprofits are likely to face a demand in services in the coming weeks and perhaps months. For example, domestic violence service providers expect some increase in the need for orders of protection, while being uncertain about whether local courthouses will be open or closed.
- Organizations that are subject to the constraints of Medicaid funding often serve the most vulnerable people in the state; they operate under inflexible contracts in many cases, and do not have access to other innovative sources of funding such as loans from the SBA. Their unique needs will need to be considered as we think through the economic impact of the coronavirus.
- We rely on nonprofits to fill significant gaps in Montana. Yet they will be facing resource challenges due to special event cancellations, decreased volunteerism, and declines in the stock market which impact donor giving. At the same time, they will face increased demand for their services and their leadership in communities.

We respectfully urge you to consult with nonprofit leaders statewide as we respond together to an emerging crisis. We hope you will consider the following as you develop a statewide, systemic approach to this particular emerging threat:

- Nonprofits are a trusted presence and communications pipeline for many of their constituencies year-round; this is a resource that can be drawn on during crisis. Montana Nonprofit Association will use our communications systems and listservs to deploy information rapidly; we will be a resource to your office in whatever ways might be helpful.
- One third of Montana's charitable nonprofits pay wages, employing more than 11% of the state's workforce. We ask that any consideration given to employment-focused relief or stimulus include Montana's nonprofit employers, keeping in mind that SBA loans are not available to charitable nonprofits and commercial loans are often out of reach.

- Insofar as state agencies can create flexibility in the terms and deadlines of contracts and grants, they position nonprofits to respond more immediately and specifically to the needs in their communities.
- Nonprofits like museums and performing arts centers which contribute to the vibrancy of our communities are as dependent on sales as any Main Street business. We ask that nonprofits be considered in economic stimulus planning and incentives.

Your administration has a strong history of listening and responding. We hope you will include nonprofit leaders as you seek frontline input and craft solutions. We will provide real-time information or insight to you and your staff in whatever ways are useful. You can count on the nonprofit community to be a partner in your work, and you can count on MNA to be a resource and communications conduit.

Thank you, and very best in the challenging weeks ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Liz Moore", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Liz Moore, Executive Director