

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

GREG GIANFORTE
GOVERNOR



KRISTEN JURAS
LT. GOVERNOR

July 28, 2021

Senator Ryan Osmundson, Chair, Legislative Finance Committee
Representative Mary Caferro, Vice-Chair, Legislative Finance Committee
Representative Frank Garner, Health Advisory Commission
Adam Meier, Director, MT Department of Public Health and Human Services

Dear Committee and Commission Members,

Thank you for the commission's recommendations contained in your July 26, 2021 letter regarding American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds allocated to the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS).

Presently, the recommendations comply with ARPA and all applicable guidance. I approve the following recommendations for these recent programs and funds with no changes.

1. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Early Intervention Funding

Allocate \$1,218,273 to Montana Milestones/Part C for increased Child Find events and outreach, summer bridge activities for three-year-olds, increase Family Outcomes Survey participation, support for infant and toddler mental health professional development, to conduct an assessment with recommendations addressing how best to serve children with special needs, and to the extent allowable by federal law, to provide funding for workforce bonuses.

2. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)

Allocate \$310,026 in CAPTA funds to expand and enhance Multidisciplinary Teams (MDT) and Children's Advocacy Centers (CAC) in Montana, provide training and technical support to existing MDT and CACs, expand safety science methods to MDTs and CACs, and increase forensic interview trainings.

3. Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS) Funding

Allocate \$1,000,000 per year for five years in supplemental STD funding to support the hiring, training, and technical assistance of Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS) to address priority areas of Montana in need of additional DIS personnel to combat and prevent communicable disease, including COVID-19.

4. ELC Reopening Schools: Support for Screening and Testing to Reopen and Keep Schools

Allocate \$14,485,981, which is 50 percent of the remaining, unallocated supplemental grant, to support COVID-19 screening and testing to reopen schools and ensure their safe operation. DPHHS shall issue disbursements on an as-needed basis to ensure enrolled school districts and private schools can access funds in a timely manner in preparation for the 2021-2022 school year.

5. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Administration funds for FY 2022 and FY 2023

Allocate \$1,634,195.64 in SNAP administration funds. These funds will enable the department to expand the SNAP Employment and Training program across the state to assist members of SNAP households to gain skills, training, or work experience necessary to increase their ability to obtain regular employment and earnings that lead to self-sufficiency. The program expansion will be built on a framework that will lead to sustained expansion of the program into the future without reliance on state funds.

I look forward to future recommendations from the commission to utilize these federal funds in the most prudent manner.

Sincerely,


GREG GIANFORTE
GOVERNOR