



RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE REIMAGINE RURAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

Whereas, Governor Mike Parson has stated strong support for Missouri's workforce and infrastructure and improving citizens' health and health care by developing better access to providers and hospitals, especially in our rural areas; and

Whereas, Missouri's rural hospitals desire to work with Governor Parson to address health care issues; and

Whereas, rural Missouri has an acute shortage of behavioral health providers and access could be expanded through better integrated primary care services; and

Whereas, it is essential to have a primary health care system with the capacity to ensure that individuals receive the care they need, manage chronic conditions and live healthy lives, and six rural hospitals have closed in Missouri since 2014; and

Whereas, Missouri is the only state in the country without a state-legislated prescription drug monitoring program and the opioid and substance abuse crisis is one of the greatest public health threats facing Missouri; and

Whereas, rural Missourians face increasingly constrained access to health-enabling amenities such as nutritious food, recreation and gainful employment that reach far beyond poverty and require a systemwide approach to effectively moderate their effects on health outcomes; and

Whereas, expansion of Missouri's nationally recognized Primary Care Health Home Initiative has the potential to improve health outcomes, incent rural providers to remain in rural communities, and save scarce rural health care funding by directing the focus of care on prevention and wellness; and

Whereas, challenges to rural infrastructure are significant and Governor Parson has championed investment in infrastructure; and

Whereas, vibrant communities are characterized by organizations collaborating for the betterment of all its citizens; and

Whereas, Missouri's hospitals employ more than 150,000 workers across the state and are a major driver of economic activity;

Therefore, the Board of Trustees of the Missouri Hospital Association hereby goes on record in support of strengthening rural health care in Missouri and Governor Parson's focus on workforce, infrastructure and Medicaid payment reform.

**Missouri Hospital Association Board of Trustees
March 2019**