

To: Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee
From: Eric Arzubi, MD
Chair of Psychiatry, Billings Clinic
Re: A Plan to Train and Retain Psychiatrists in Montana
Date: November 6, 2015

The Problem

- Montana is facing a mental health crisis due in part to a shortage of psychiatrists.
- Recruiting and retaining psychiatrists in Montana has proven to be very challenging and expensive.
- Montana, along with Wyoming and Alaska, ranks highest in the U.S. in terms of suicide completion rate.
- Montana, Wyoming, and Alaska are the three only states in the U.S. without a psychiatrist training program.

The Solution

- **Train and retain up to 4 psychiatrists in Montana every year** by creating a Montana Psychiatry Training Track in collaboration with the University of Washington and the Veterans Administration.
- Design the Training Track based on an existing, very successful model pioneered by the University of Washington in Idaho and Washington.
- The Training Track model has led to retention rates for graduating psychiatrists of over 60% in Idaho and over 80% in Washington.