



Big Sky Resort Area District  
11 Lone Peak Drive #204  
PO Box 160661  
Big Sky, MT 59716  
[www.Resorttax.org](http://www.Resorttax.org)  
info@resorttax.org  
406.995.3234

July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020

The Honorable Representative Greg Gianforte  
Washington, DC Office  
1222 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: Expanding Montana's Panther® and Cepheid® Test Kit Supply

Dear Representative Gianforte,

We are writing you on behalf of Big Sky, Montana regarding support of the Gallatin and Madison health system amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. As you are aware, Big Sky is unincorporated and straddles County lines. While we are a relatively small population, the taxable property value within our Resort Area District, easily ranks top 5 state-wide. I also am sure you are aware that last year, Gallatin County alone generated \$659 million in economic activity, ranking #1 in Montana for nonresident spending. In short, Big Sky is a massive economic driver for Montana. Amidst the pandemic, local tax collections this summer are anticipated to be down up to 50% but by working together we can safely launch a healthy winter season. Our winter economy fuels lodging tax revenue on par with Billings and will supplement state revenue lost this summer but recoverable this winter.

Our pandemic response has been rapid, beginning Mid-March with the exemplary leadership of our business community and formation of [www.BigSkyRelief.org](http://www.BigSkyRelief.org). The subsequent result of our efforts not only minimized the spread of COVID-19 in Montana through preemptive closure of winter operations, but also forged innovative public-philanthropic partnerships for funding key health initiatives in preparation of surges. These included considerable collaboration with the Bozeman Health system to fund building expanded capacity of rooms, purchasing 8 ventilators (not delivered – needs your support) to increase County capacity, and acquiring an analyzer (no testing kits – needs your support) to rapidly test for COVID-19 and minimize spread in Southwest Montana. Additionally, we have partnered to fund and implement Big Sky Wastewater Surveillance and most recently purchased 50,000 masks for businesses to aid in mitigating virus transmission.

Bozeman Health, in partnership with Gallatin City-County Health and Madison County Public Health, are developing a progressive plan for Testing and Surveillance in Big Sky, starting immediately and ideally continuing through the ski season. The intention was to create a plan template to serve as a roadmap to sister communities throughout Montana. The missing link in this plan is our ability to rapidly test using Bozeman Health equipment due to insufficient kit supply in Montana. Results from the recently conducted community-wide testing will not be received for 7-10 days, thus limiting the effectiveness of surveillance testing. Using Bozeman Health's Panther® machine, we can process up to 1000 tests per day, thus drastically decreasing the testing turnaround time resulting in less spread of COVID-19 and ultimately saving lives. Getting quarantined workers back to work upon testing negative also supports economic recovery and working Montanans.

**We need your immediate support of increasing Montana's Panther® and Cepheid® testing kit supply, helping to procure the ventilators we ordered in April, and CARES funding to endorse our testing plan thus supporting the health and safety of our most valuable winter economy – Southwest Montana.**

The partnership between local, regional, and state stakeholders has been unparalleled. However, without additional Federal support, testing and surveillance in Southwest Montana will not only be ineffectively slow, but also crushing to our business climate and economy. Private employers are currently resorting to 3<sup>rd</sup> party testing, additionally straining already stressed businesses. This is only a short-term Band-Aid as Southwest Montana has, and will continue to be, the State’s “hot spot” of COVID-19 activity. Please help us provide a safe and healthy environment, and improve the Montana’s economy – support our request for test kits and financial resources. We are extremely grateful for the support thus far from Dr. Holzman and team, the State lab, as well as your leadership representing the great State of Montana during these difficult times.

Sincerely,



Kevin Germain  
Board Chair  
Big Sky Resort Area District

**Melissa Brummell, RN**  
Melissa Brummell, RN (Jul 10, 2020 16:02 MDT)  
Melissa Brummell  
Public Health Nurse  
Madison County Public Health Department

**Matt Kelley**  
Matt Kelley (Jul 10, 2020 17:43 MDT)  
Matt Kelly  
Health Officer  
Gallatin City-County Health Department

**John G Hill**  
John G Hill (Jul 11, 2020 05:41 MDT)  
John Hill  
CEO  
Bozeman Health



Greg Megaard (Jul 10, 2020 15:57 MDT)  
Greg Megaard  
Fire Chief  
Big Sky Fire Department

**Troy Nedved**  
Troy Nedved (Jul 8, 2020 14:25 MDT)  
Troy Nedved  
General Manager  
Big Sky Resort



Candace Carr Straus  
CEO  
Big Sky Chamber of Commerce

**Hans Williamson**  
Hans Williamson (Jul 10, 2020 12:52 MDT)  
Hans Williamson  
General Manager  
Yellowstone Club

**Louise Astbury**  
Louise Astbury (Jul 9, 2020 06:32 MDT)  
Louise Astbury  
General Manager  
Spanish Peaks Mountain Club



Mike Wilczynski (Jul 8, 2020 16:38 MDT)  
Mike Wilczynski  
General Manager  
Moonlight Basin

**Ciara Wolfe**  
Ciara Wolfe (Jul 8, 2020 12:58 MDT)  
Ciara Wolfe  
CEO  
Big Sky Community Organization

CC:  
State of Montana - Senator John Tester  
State of Montana - Senator Steve Daines  
State of Montana Governor - Steve Bullock  
State Medical Officer - Gregory Holzman

**SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS**





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July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020

The Honorable Senator John Tester  
Washington, DC Office  
311 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-2604

Subject: Expanding Montana's Panther<sup>®</sup> and Cepheid<sup>®</sup> Test Kit Supply

Dear Senator Tester,

We are writing you on behalf of Big Sky, Montana regarding support of the Gallatin and Madison health system amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. As you are aware, Big Sky is unincorporated and straddles County lines. While we are a relatively small population, the taxable property value within our Resort Area District, easily ranks top 5 state-wide. I also am sure you are aware that last year, Gallatin County alone generated \$659 million in economic activity, ranking #1 in Montana for nonresident spending. In short, Big Sky is a massive economic driver for Montana. Amidst the pandemic, local tax collections this summer are anticipated to be down up to 50% but by working together we can safely launch a healthy winter season. Our winter economy fuels lodging tax revenue on par with Billings and will supplement state revenue lost this summer but recoverable this winter.

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**We need your immediate support of increasing Montana's Panther<sup>®</sup> and Cepheid<sup>®</sup> testing kit supply, helping to procure the ventilators we ordered in April, and CARES funding to endorse our testing plan thus supporting the health and safety of our most valuable winter economy – Southwest Montana.**

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Sincerely,



Kevin Germain  
Board Chair  
Big Sky Resort Area District

**Melissa Brummell, RN**

Melissa Brummell, RN (Jul 10, 2020 16:01 MDT)

Melissa Brummell  
Public Health Nurse  
Madison County Public Health Department

**Matt Kelley**

Matt Kelley (Jul 10, 2020 17:42 MDT)

Matt Kelly  
Health Officer  
Gallatin City-County Health Department

**John G Hill**

John G Hill (Jul 11, 2020 05:38 MDT)

John Hill  
CEO  
Bozeman Health



Greg Megaard (Jul 10, 2020 15:58 MDT)

Greg Megaard  
Fire Chief  
Big Sky Fire Department

**Troy Nedved**

Troy Nedved (Jul 8, 2020 14:24 MDT)

Troy Nedved  
General Manager  
Big Sky Resort



Candace Carr Straus  
CEO  
Big Sky Chamber of Commerce

**Hans Williamson**

Hans Williamson (Jul 10, 2020 09:39 MDT)

Hans Williamson  
General Manager  
Yellowstone Club

**Louise Astbury**

Louise Astbury (Jul 9, 2020 06:33 MDT)

Louise Astbury  
General Manager  
Spanish Peaks Mountain Club



Mike Wilczynski (Jul 8, 2020 16:37 MDT)

Mike Wilczynski  
General Manager  
Moonlight Basin

**Ciara Wolfe**

Ciara Wolfe (Jul 8, 2020 12:57 MDT)

Ciara Wolfe  
CEO  
Big Sky Community Organization

CC:

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Troy Nedved  
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Big Sky Resort



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CEO  
Big Sky Chamber of Commerce

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Hans Williamson (Jul 10, 2020 12:51 MDT)

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