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Office of Governor Steve Sisolak

March 8, 2021

Dear Chair Khan, Members of the Nevada Patient Protection Commission, and Executive Director Cholhagian:

When I first took office, I began to work on innovative public policy solutions to increase access to affordable, quality health care. In 2019, Nevada took bold steps to create better opportunities for all Nevadans by securing protections for Nevadans with pre-existing conditions, combating the devastating practice of surprise billing, increasing transparency in pricing for prescription drugs and creating this commission. I remain committed to addressing the rising costs of health care and increasing access to help individuals and families across the state, especially in our ongoing battle with the pandemic.

In Nevada, more than 50% of the racially diverse population is at risk of poor health outcomes. My priority as governor is to spend our health care dollars efficiently to ensure adequate funding is funneled to communities that have been disproportionately affected by racism and oppression. As we face difficult budget conversations, I welcome the help of outside experts to help contain health care costs while ensuring Nevadans are taken care of.

Our state was invited to be part of an important multi-state collaborative, the Peterson-Milbank Program for Sustainable Health Care Costs, which will advance state efforts to address health care cost growth. Upon receiving this invite, I asked Executive Director Cholhagian to serve as the designated state official to lead the program's work across my administration. She facilitated the next steps in the application process that ultimately secured our state's approval to join this initiative and I could not be more thrilled for this opportunity.

For too long, there has been a discussion and overall agreement that our state needs to take a new approach to fix issues that make us the most vulnerable state in the nation anytime the economy takes a hit. COVID-19 has led to temporary reductions in health care spending but this unprecedented public health and economic crisis provides us with a unique opportunity to forge an innovative path that will propel Nevada forward. It is important to have the capacity to monitor health care cost growth trends as the delivery of routine health care services begin to ramp up.

I am writing to request the assistance of this commission to join Director Cholhagian in our state's participation in this program and seek your recommendations to: 1) Develop a statewide health care cost growth benchmark; 2) Calculate and analyze statewide health care cost growth; and 3) Analyze drivers of health care cost growth.

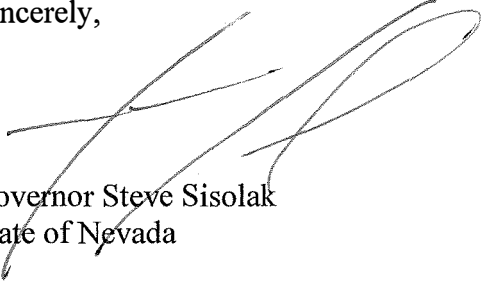
To further support the ongoing work of this commission, I have requested the Legislature transition the commission to align with other patient advocacy services in our state housed under the

Department of Health and Human Services. This request aims at providing more critical resources to the commission but does not affect my office's continued collaboration with you and specifically my communication with Director Chalhagian, who will continue to serve as an appointed official of mine.

We continue to need your recommendations on how Nevada can build, strengthen, and sustain the health care system and public health infrastructure our state needs in these unprecedented times. I look forward to seeing the work of this commission continue and expand to include the implementation of the Peterson-Milbank Program for Sustainable Health Care Costs.

Thank you for your service and your ongoing service to our state. I look forward to working together to build the health care system Nevadans deserve.

Sincerely,



Governor Steve Sisolak
State of Nevada