



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER

GOVERNOR

March 27, 2012

The Honorable Lawrence Denney
Speaker of the House
State Capitol
Boise, ID 83702

Dear Mr. Speaker,

I hereby advise you that I have transmitted today to the Secretary of State the following House Bill, which was allowed to become law without my signature:

HB 615

as prescribed by the Constitution.

If Idaho and 25 other states are successful in challenging the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act – Obamacare – it is imperative that we develop collaborative and substantive reforms to the Catastrophic Health Care Fund program in 2013. We will know in June of this year whether that is the case.

As I write this letter, the high court is hearing the second of three days of historic arguments on the constitutional challenge to Obamacare's individual mandate on American citizens to purchase health insurance if they lack coverage starting in 2014.

If the Supreme Court strikes down the federal mandate as unconstitutional, careful evaluation and thorough stakeholder involvement is needed to enact responsible reforms to the administration of and expectations for the "Cat Fund" before any ongoing appropriation is approved. I look forward to working with the Legislature, counties and other concerned parties to develop a workable, well-defined process for paying indigent citizens' medical costs.

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare reports that reform must include claims processing that meets industry standards, case management for Medicaid-eligible chronic disease patients, an integrated software system for eligibility determinations at both the county and State levels, and a rewrite of Idaho's indigent and catastrophic health care statutes with a concise description of the role of counties, the State, hospitals and other providers, and citizens. Only with such key changes will we address continuing problems with the Cat Fund's equity and effectiveness.

The Honorable Lawrence Denney
March 27, 2012

As Always – Idaho, “Esto Perpetua”

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "C.L. 'Butch' Otter".

C.L. "Butch" Otter
Governor of Idaho

Cc: Lieutenant Governor Brad Little