



MONTANA ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

8 CLOVERVIEW, HELENA, MONTANA 59601 • PHONE (406) 431-9384

Montana's next legislative session will convene in January of 2019. There is currently a Ballot Initiative I-185 (attached) that is becoming a huge issue with constant TV ads and publications and will be voted on in November.

Proponents argue that I-185 will enhance health care and essential support services for thousands of Montana and insist that if you don't smoke, you pay nothing. The Montana legislature voted to expand Medicaid in 2015 with the HELP act that now provides health insurance for 90,000 Montanans. This coverage is due to expire in 2019 but I-185 would continue health insurance coverage for thousands of Montanans and will help sustain the rural clinics and hospitals that serve small towns. I-185 will fully fund Medicaid expansion in Montana while providing funds for tobacco cessation programs and veterans services such as suicide prevention. The opposition to I-185 is funded almost entirely by the global parent corporations of some of the world's largest tobacco companies.

Opponents argue that this is an unlawful mandate that leaves all Montanans on the hook for tens of millions per year and permanently expands a massive entitlement program. They say that special interests are gaming the system to bypass the legislature, avoiding needed evaluations and permanently locking into place a program designed to be re-evaluated.