

JAY INSLEE
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON
Office of the Governor

May 19, 2020

Sue Birch
Director
Washington State Health Care Authority
626 8th Avenue SE
Olympia, WA 98501

Pam MacEwan
Chief Executive Officer
Washington State Health Benefit Exchange
810 Jefferson Street SE
Olympia, WA 98501

Dear Director Birch and Chief Executive MacEwan:

One year ago, I signed landmark health care legislation creating Cascade Care and introducing the nation's first public option health insurance plan. This monumental achievement was the result of several years of hard work to expand and protect healthcare under the Affordable Care Act.

Today we are in the midst of a public health crisis, the likes of which I have never before experienced. It is more important than ever before that we continue forward with Cascade Care and introduce high quality, affordable health insurance options to the people of Washington for 2021.

I fully recognize the challenges of introducing such a bold program and understand that this will be a multi-year journey. Our current situation has tested the mettle of our state's entire healthcare system. While Cascade Care may take a preliminary approach in its initial year, we fully expect it to flourish in future years.

As we enter a new era that will be defined by our public's health, safety, and well-being, Cascade Care will play a pivotal role for individuals and families seeking health insurance coverage in our state. Health insurance has now become a form of security, and Cascade Care provides that peace of mind.

During last year's signing ceremony, I stated that healthcare is a right, not a privilege. Despite constant barrages from the current Federal administration, we continue to build on the successes of the Affordable Care Act in Washington State. Cascade Care leads the nation in offering a new and innovative approach to health insurance. I look forward to its future success.

Thank you for all you are doing to make Cascade Care a reality and for all you are doing to help Washingtonians feel secure about the healthcare they receive.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Inslee".

Jay Inslee
Governor

CC: The Honorable Mike Kreidler, Insurance Commissioner, Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner
The Honorable Eileen Cody, Representative, Washington State House of Representatives
The Honorable David Frockt, Senator, Washington State Senate

