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Montana Medical Association Honors Legislator Leaders who Advanced Healthcare Policy in 2025
Montana Legislators Awarded for Important Healthcare Contributions

Helena, MT, October 26, 2025 – The Montana Medical Association (MMA) is pleased to announce that Representative Jonathan Karlen of Missoula has been named as an inaugural recipient of the *Montana Medical Association Legislators of Impact Award*, presented during the 147th MMA Annual Meeting on September 12, 2025.

This newly established award honors legislators whose leadership and service have had a profound and lasting impact on the health and well-being of Montanans. The recognition highlights those who demonstrate exceptional collaboration, foresight, and a steadfast commitment to advancing sound, patient-centered health policy.

This year, the award is presented to Representative Karlen in recognition of his dedication to policy reform aimed at reducing unnecessary administrative burdens that delay patient care and compromise access. His legislative leadership reflects a deep understanding that healthcare policy works best when it is built around the needs of patients and the expertise of those who provide their care.

“Representative Jonathan Karlen’s contributions have driven meaningful policy change and played a vital role in the passage of key patient-centered health legislation to reduce patient care delays and administrative burdens resulting from unnecessary prior authorization requirements, stated Ernest Gray, MD, MMA President during the presentation of the award.

Representative Karlen introduced HB 398 and HB 399, priority legislation of the MMA and the Montana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. These bills modernize and streamline the prior authorization process, which often delays necessary medical care and increases administrative workload for healthcare providers.

The passage of HB 398 and HB 399 marked a major breakthrough in healthcare policy during the 2025 legislative session, delivering real, measurable improvements for patients and healthcare professionals alike. Under the new laws, patients will experience fewer delays in receiving needed care, while physicians and healthcare teams will spend less time on paperwork and more time with their patients.

Representative Karlen’s leadership and perseverance helped ensure that these critical reforms moved from concept to reality—despite complex negotiations and challenging legislative dynamics. His work reflects



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a genuine commitment to protecting patient access, physician and healthcare provider autonomy, and healthcare fairness.

Through his vision and leadership, Representative Karlen has demonstrated that effective policy change is possible when lawmakers, physicians, and communities work together toward a shared goal: ensuring that every Montanan can access timely, high-quality care.