Montana

The Montana legislature was much more active in the 2017 legislative term than it had been in previous sessions. Three healthcare bills relating to healthcare costs and markets passed the legislature, but were all vetoed by the Governor. These bills aimed to provide tax incentives for high-deductible health insurance plans, provide out of state insurer options, and revise current healthcare coverage laws.

Montana was fairly active in healthcare reform in prior terms. The state passed a bill in 2011 to study the viability of implementing a state APCD. It directed the insurance commissioner to convene an advisory council to review the costs, benefits, and requirements necessary to maintain a statewide all-payer claims database (APCD) for healthcare. The council’s final report, published July 2011, recommends that the state study existing APCDs in other states to avoid the “pitfalls and challenges certain to emerge as the APCD is developed and expanded.” Additionally, in 2013, the legislature approved a bill to grant the commissioner of insurance rate-setting authority (a similar proposition failed in California). In addition, rural hospitals in Montana are increasingly consolidating, which has arguably been accelerated by the state’s election to reject Medicaid expansion.