



July 21, 2023

Dear Commissioner Donelon,

I respectfully submit this letter supporting the proposed acquisition of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana (BCBSLA) by Elevance Health. I am deeply committed to improving the overall health of those that call Louisiana home, and I am very excited about the proposed acquisition of BCBSLA by Elevance Health. I founded Beacon Community Connections as a 501c3 nonprofit with the mission to help people in need through connection, collaboration and advocacy for individual wellness and community quality of life. BCBSLA Foundation and BCBSLA have been great supporters of Beacon and its mission to connect people in need to community resources. Through their support, Beacon was able to complete a pilot project which showed its positive impact on patients and health systems. For the past five years, BCBSLA has supported Beacon's South Louisiana Community Health Summit and South Louisiana Community Health Festival which provide education and resources to healthcare professionals and the general public.

This transaction has the potential to exponentially advance access to healthcare innovation, services, and capabilities for Louisianians at a much faster rate than BCBSLA could do alone. Elevance Health's almost \$4 billion investment in healthcare services and capabilities is impressive, and we deserve to benefit from these investments.

In addition to the increased access to new capabilities BCBSLA will be able to bring to Louisiana, I am especially excited about The Accelerate Louisiana Initiative. With more than \$3 billion in assets, this foundation will have the ability to make a material difference in the health and lives of the people of Louisiana. And the fact that it will be solely focused on Louisiana is unprecedented and impressive. Louisiana continues to lag the nation in almost all health indicators, and unprecedented steps are called for in order to improve the health of the more than four million people who call Louisiana home. I fully support the bold step BCBSLA has taken to secure its future, and I strongly recommend that the Louisiana Department of Insurance approve this transaction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Holly Howat".

Dr. Holly Howat
Founder and Executive Director
Beacon Community Connections

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JUL 27 2023

Commissioner of Insurance
Legal Division