

Rec. 7-17-23



July 11, 2023

Commissioner Jim Donelon
PO Box 94214
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9214

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Commissioner of Insurance
Legal Division

Dear Commissioner Donelon,

It is my pleasure to draft this letter of support for the proposed acquisition of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana by Elevance Health.

My firm has a longstanding working relationship with BCBSLA. We service groups across Louisiana and can speak about the state of the health insurance market in Louisiana.

While it is no secret that Louisiana ranks near the bottom of all states in a healthy population, BCBSLA has made strides over the last decade to incentivize healthy treatment outcomes. This process takes considerable investment. Something that is difficult for a standalone plan to maintain. A merger with Elevance would open the door to the game-changing amount of research and development funds for this valuable proposition.

Technology is another area where it is difficult for a standalone plan to keep pace with national carriers. I speak from experience when I tell you that the BCBSLA technology is years behind their national competitors. Just as we have seen with hospital consolidation, access to Elevance's technology will greatly improve the level of service.

After speaking with counterparts across the country in states where Elevance operates I came away impressed with their business model of maintaining local leadership, and business authority in their Blue Markets.

While there is some financial benefit for policyholders in this sale the real beneficiaries will be all citizens of the state of Louisiana. The decision to invest \$3 billion dollars in the Accelerate Louisiana Initiative could have an impact on this state for generations. Their mission to invest in health inequities across the state is magnificent. For once Louisiana can be a leader in enhancing quality of life issues.

In closing I am confident that my customers will benefit from this transaction. As a member of the Commissioner's Agent Advisory Board, I recommend approval from the Department of Insurance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Duaine D. Duffy", is written over a printed name. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Duaine D. Duffy