



USI Insurance Services
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September 13, 2023

Mr. James J. Donelon
Louisiana Commissioner of Insurance

Dear Commissioner Donelon:

Please accept this letter supporting the proposed acquisition of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana (BCBSLA) by Elevance Health.

I am a Senior Vice President for USI Insurance Services and the leader of USI's Employee Benefits Practice for Louisiana. USI has had a successful business relationship with BCBSLA for many years.

It is no secret that Louisiana ranks at or near the bottom in many health rankings. It's vital that my fellow Louisianians have access to new innovations, technologies, and capabilities as soon as possible to help improve their health and access to care. While we value our close, local relationships with BCBSLA, we know they need to quickly develop more capabilities to stay current with the marketplace. We are concerned that if BCBSLA continues to work as an independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield plan it could take too long for them to develop many of these new capabilities themselves. The acquisition will allow BCBSLA to gain access to these capabilities to reach Louisianians much quicker than they could on their own.

One organization working alone can't solve the healthcare issues in Louisiana. That is why I'm very excited about *The Accelerate Louisiana Initiative*. With more than \$3 billion in assets, this is an unprecedented opportunity for Louisiana.

Finally, having personally worked as part of Elevance Health's Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield brand in the past, I believe their model of maintaining local leadership and decision-making authority in their Blue-branded markets is critical.

We feel that Louisiana's health care and health insurance systems can benefit from this transaction, and I recommend approval from the department of insurance.

Please understand that my comments should not be attributed to USI Insurance Services, but rather are made in my capacity as a concerned resident of Louisiana working for improved health and access to care for all Louisianians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William J. Crombie", followed by a horizontal line.

William J. Crombie
Partner, Senior Vice President, and Employee Benefits Practice Leader