



Friday, Sept. 22, 2023

Dear Commissioner Donelon,

On behalf of the Pugh Family Foundation, I respectfully submit this letter supporting the proposed acquisition of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana by Elevance Health.

The Pugh Family Foundation has worked for more than two decades to improve our state, and our efforts have benefitted greatly from our ongoing, cross-sector partnerships with the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana Foundation. But our state's urgent social, health, and education sector challenges require exponentially greater amounts of innovation and funding support. For these reasons, we are writing to express not just our support, but also our request for expedience in the launch of the Accelerate Louisiana Initiative.

Partnership is often a cornerstone to progress, and the capacity of this new foundation as well as its ability to work to see beyond current challenges toward implementing global best practices will be a game-changer for so many organizations currently working to impact the many now diminishing our state's educational, economic, and health outcomes.

In the words of Thomas LaVeist, PhD, Dean of Tulane University's School of Public Health & Tropical Medicine, "People are sicker than they should be, and dying younger than they ought to die." Racial and ethnic health inequities and disparities, their recent study points out, cost the United States approximately \$450B per year.

Four million Louisiana citizens are waiting for innovative leadership and additional resources, which this proposed \$3B foundation would provide. Thank you for your attention to these pressing social justice issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Todd Mouton'.

Todd Mouton  
Executive Director

**Pugh Family Foundation**

*Creating a better tomorrow through education*

P.O. Box 51366, Lafayette, LA 70505  
[www.pughfamilyfoundation.org](http://www.pughfamilyfoundation.org)