

# LAUREL C.A.R.E.D.

Community Advocates for Responsible Economic Development

---

331 South Washington, Suite A • Laurel, MT 59044  
connect@laurelcared.com • (406) 272-3707 • laurelcared.com

---

March 5, 2026

The Honorable Greg Gianforte  
Governor of Montana  
Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620-0801

Dear Governor Gianforte,

On behalf of Laurel C.A.R.E.D. (Community Advocates for Responsible Economic Development), we are writing to formally invite you to participate in a community town hall meeting in Laurel, Montana.

Event Details:

Date: Monday, March 16, 2026

Time: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Location: Laurel High School Auditorium, Laurel, Montana

The residents of Laurel have serious and unresolved concerns regarding the proposed placement of a forensic mental health prison on a lot whose property line sits approximately 459 yards from the property line of West Elementary School. Despite repeated attempts to engage state and local officials, our community has received inadequate responses and has been denied meaningful transparency in this process.

As Governor, decisions made under your administration have direct bearing on this prison's approval and siting. You have made public statements that have not been followed through. You appointed the agencies leading this project — agencies that have denied your own constituents basic transparency, ignored requests for information, and treated the people of Laurel as an afterthought in a decision that will permanently affect their community. The residents of Laurel

are not an afterthought. They are your constituents, and they deserve the opportunity to hear from you directly and to receive honest answers to their questions.

We are inviting you to participate in a structured Q&A panel during the town hall. This is not a debate — it is an opportunity for state leadership to be accountable to the citizens of Laurel. Questions will be submitted in advance by community members and moderated by a neutral facilitator.

We respectfully request your attendance or the attendance of a designated representative with full authority to speak on your behalf.

Please respond by March 11, 2026 so that we may plan accordingly.

**Laurel C.A.R.E.D.**

Community Advocates for Responsible Economic Development

Laurel, Montana

[connect@laurelcared.com](mailto:connect@laurelcared.com)

(406) 272-3707

[laurelcared.com](http://laurelcared.com)

# LAUREL C.A.R.E.D.

Community Advocates for Responsible Economic Development

---

331 South Washington, Suite A • Laurel, MT 59044  
connect@laurelcared.com • (406) 272-3707 • laurelcared.com

---

March 5, 2026

Charlie Brereton, Director  
Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services  
111 N. Sanders, Suite 301  
P.O. Box 4210  
Helena, MT 59604-4210

Dear Director Brereton,

On behalf of Laurel C.A.R.E.D. (Community Advocates for Responsible Economic Development), we are writing to formally invite you to participate in a community town hall meeting in Laurel, Montana.

Event Details:

Date: Monday, March 16, 2026

Time: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Location: Laurel High School Auditorium, Laurel, Montana

The community of Laurel has significant unresolved concerns about the proposed siting of a Forensic mental health prison on a lot whose property line sits approximately 459 yards from the property line of West Elementary School. The Department of Public Health and Human Services plays a central role in this facility's planning, licensing, and oversight — and our community has received insufficient information about the decision-making process, safety protocols, and the rationale for this location.

Director Brereton, you are on record. On October 6, 2025, you committed to facilitating "robust engagement with local stakeholders...prior to final site selection." That did not happen. Your department's own FAQ promised a series of community meetings once a site was selected. Those meetings have not happened. The residents of Laurel learned about state plans through the news — not through you. That is not engagement. That is not transparency.

Your November 26, 2025 proposal also stated that all required permits, zoning, and local approvals would be obtained in full compliance with applicable ordinances and resolutions. That commitment has not yet been violated — but given the pattern of promises made and ignored by your office, this community is not confident that it won't be. The people of Laurel are not willing to wait until they have been steamrolled to start asking questions. We are asking them now.

We are inviting you to participate in a structured Q&A panel during the town hall meeting. Questions will be submitted in advance by community members and moderated by a neutral facilitator. This is an opportunity for DPHHS to directly address community concerns with transparency and candor.

We respectfully request your attendance or the attendance of a designated representative with full authority to speak on your behalf regarding the facility's planning and approval process.

Please respond by March 11, 2026 so that we may plan accordingly.

**Laurel C.A.R.E.D.**

Community Advocates for Responsible Economic Development

Laurel, Montana

[connect@laurelcared.com](mailto:connect@laurelcared.com)

(406) 272-3707

[laurelcared.com](http://laurelcared.com)

# LAUREL C.A.R.E.D.

Community Advocates for Responsible Economic Development

---

331 South Washington, Suite A • Laurel, MT 59044  
connect@laurelcared.com • (406) 272-3707 • laurelcared.com

---

March 5, 2026

Dan Villa, Executive Director  
Montana Board of Investments  
P.O. Box 200126  
Helena, MT 59620-0126

Dear Director Villa,

On behalf of Laurel C.A.R.E.D. (Community Advocates for Responsible Economic Development), we are writing to formally invite you to participate in a community town hall meeting in Laurel, Montana.

Event Details:

Date: Monday, March 16, 2026

Time: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Location: Laurel High School Auditorium, Laurel, Montana

You know this community. You came here. You presented before the Laurel City Council and made explicit commitments on the record. You told the council that when BOI entered into a buy-sell agreement, they would hear about it first — not from the press. They heard about it from the press. You told the council that BOI would follow every existing city resolution, ordinance, and process governing land use in Laurel, and that BOI did not intend to circumvent city governance. The community of Laurel is still waiting for evidence of that commitment. From where we are standing, it looks a whole lot like you conspired to do exactly the opposite.

Laurel never submitted a formal proposal for this facility. Hardin did. Miles City did. Laurel did not — because this community was not given the opportunity to decide whether it wanted to. The Board of Investments selected Laurel anyway, in coordination with DPHHS, based on a plan the public had no part in shaping. The residents of Laurel did not raise their hands for this.

When the community organized and the Laurel Chamber of Commerce scheduled a public meeting for January 30th, you cancelled it — not because of a scheduling conflict, but because too many members of our community wanted to participate and the venue was moved to the

high school. The Chamber's statement made clear: this was BOI's decision. When the Chamber attempted to reschedule, BOI refused all further public meetings entirely — agreeing only to attend a required city council session after zoning documentation was filed. You have much to answer for.

The residents of Laurel have submitted public records requests and were quoted thousands of dollars for access. They have been stonewalled, ignored, and told to wait. A legislative attorney has flagged unresolved legal questions about the financial structure of this project that the AG could not fully answer because BOI has not provided the financial instruments needed to answer them.

You have avoided this community at every turn. We are giving you the opportunity to face it.

We are inviting you to participate in a structured Q&A panel at the town hall. Questions will be submitted in advance by community members and moderated by a neutral facilitator. This is your opportunity to answer for the decisions BOI has made and to tell the people of Laurel — directly — what your commitments mean.

We request your attendance. Sending someone on your behalf would be unacceptable.

Please respond by March 11, 2026 so that we may plan accordingly.

### **Laurel C.A.R.E.D.**

Community Advocates for Responsible Economic Development

Laurel, Montana

[connect@laurelcared.com](mailto:connect@laurelcared.com)

(406) 272-3707

[laurelcared.com](http://laurelcared.com)