



**STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES**

**Bill J. Crouch  
Cabinet Secretary**

December 12, 2022

The Honorable Jim Justice  
Governor of the State of West Virginia  
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East  
Charleston, WV 25305

Dear Governor Justice,

I am announcing my plans for retirement as Cabinet Secretary for the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, effective December 31, 2022. I had promised to stay through the implementation of the consultant's report and that is almost complete. There are only a couple of decisions remaining, and those can be finalized by the end of the year as a part of the transition. Bringing in Dr. Jeff Coben, Dr. Clay Marsh and Jim Hoyer now will assure staff and the public that the department is in good hands while recruiting a permanent Cabinet Secretary.

As everyone knows, the department has been under constant scrutiny over this past year. Although most of the allegations were aimed at me, it is the department that has suffered. DHHR staff have become collateral damage. And that is wrong. The staff of DHHR are the most dedicated and smartest group of people that I have ever worked with, and I thank them for their hard work and their loyalty.

That is not to say that DHHR is perfect. We need to continue to make improvements, but the perception that everything is broken is wrong. We have done and continue to do amazing work for the people of West Virginia. Virtually all our problems are workforce problems. We have staff shortages in all Bureaus and areas of DHHR, from attorneys and nurses to food service staff in our facilities. Salaries are inadequate, and applicants for health professionals and for non-health care positions are in short supply.

I do not have the data but would guess that you have done more to increase the salaries of public employees than any other Governor in the history of the state. The 15% increases in salary over the last five legislative sessions is unprecedented. Yet we knew that was not enough for many of our crucial positions, especially in certain areas of the state. You pushed me to do more. As a result, we ended up increasing salaries for CPS workers and other childcare workers 35% statewide and 55% in the eastern panhandle. We also added sign-on bonuses, retention bonuses and other benefits, and yet, we still have a significant number of staff vacancies in this area of the state. We have a workforce crisis in WV that must be fixed.

Thank you for your leadership over the past six years and especially throughout the pandemic. You made tough decisions that saved many lives. Your guidance and your caring through these difficult times made a difference to all.

It has been the highest honor of my career to be a member of your cabinet and to lead the extraordinary people who make up DHHR. You have heard me say that it's easy to be a state employee, but it's hard to be a public servant. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve, for there truly is no greater honor.

I now plan to try that retirement thing again, and spend time with my family, especially my grandchildren. And there are a few places I haven't fly fished that are still on my list.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill J. Crouch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Bill J. Crouch