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Montana's Right to Try law creates novel pathway for life sciences companies to commercialise Phase 1 completed therapies years before full FDA approval•

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During his upcoming visit to Bengaluru, India on 7th 8 October 2026, Governor of Montana, USA, Greg Gianforte, will lead a trade and investment delegation comprising senior state officials, economic development representatives, private companies and representatives from Montana State University. During this Bengaluru visit, the Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises (ABLE) is facilitating a CXO-level Roundtable with 15th 20 leading biotechnology and biopharmaceutical companies, focusing on biosciences, biopharmaceutical manufacturing, research collaboration and opportunities for US expansion. Given Montana's capabilities in bioscience research, biologics and specialty pharmaceutical manufacturing, the visit provides an interesting opportunity to explore India's Montana collaboration in biotechnology and life sciences. BioSpectrum took this opportunity to have a detailed interaction with Greg Gianforte.



What is the State of Montana's relationship with India?

Montana's relationship with India has meaningful historical foundations. Montana's Ambassador Mike Mansfield – one of the United States' most respected diplomatic figures – helped shape early Montana India ties based on mutual respect and long-term engagement. In recognition of this relationship, the Indian government gifted Montana a bust of Mahatma Gandhi, now displayed with honor at the University of Montana and placed this spring.

Montana's character is shaped by wide open landscapes, rugged mountains, and communities built on hard work, ingenuity, and resilience. India mirrors these qualities in its own way, through its dynamic innovation ecosystem, thriving industries, and deep cultural heritage. Both of us are building the future through agriculture, technology, education, and global engagement.

What makes Montana attractive to an Indian biotechnology or life-sciences company looking at the United States?

Our state is known for our stunning vistas in both Yellowstone and Glacier National Park, but we are also an unsung oasis for high tech firms and one of America's most competitive manufacturing hubs. Indeed, since 2020 our manufacturing GDP has grown 7 percent faster than the national rate. This is in part because we boast one of the largest clusters of photonics and optics companies in the USA, with investment from around the world, as well as one of only five quantum network testbeds worldwide.

Powered by more than \$250 million in annual university research funding and major NIH investments, Montana offers a compelling headquarters option for life- and bioscience companies seeking lower operating costs and a collaborative research environment. This capacity makes our state a prime location for firms that want to innovate in an unparalleled biotech ecosystem – anchored by a rare BSL-4 lab, world-class genomics and infectious-disease research, and distinctive strengths in rural health innovation, neurogenetics, and extreme-environment science.

Companies that choose to build here also gain direct access to top engineering talent, a collaborative statewide business ecosystem, and a regulatory environment designed to accelerate responsible growth. In short, our state offers the rare combination of breathtaking quality of life and world class technical capability – an ideal place to invest, expand, and thrive.

How could Montana help an Indian biotechnology or pharmaceutical company looking to establish a presence in the United States?

For Indian companies looking toward the United States, Montana offers a strategic, welcoming, and innovation driven landing place where expanding firms receive coordinated support from our Business Attraction team, access to world class university infrastructure, and entry into one of America's most competitive advanced technology ecosystems. From photonics and quantum to bioscience and precision agriculture, we are prepared to help Indian enterprises scale in the US market, just as international partners have already done across our state.

We want Montana to be a place where companies can establish a foothold in the US, build partnerships, and grow. For Indian companies, that could mean connecting with our universities and researchers, identifying manufacturing or development opportunities, finding the right workforce, and working with our state and local partners to ensure we can meet their needs as they consider an investment.

What areas of collaboration would you most like to see between Indian and Montana companies?

As India's economy continues to grow and take center stage in the world, we want to position Montana as a partner of choice. We want to expand Montana's reach overseas. We know that businesses that export innovate faster, create more jobs, and strengthen communities across our state. India companies looking to expand are vital to Montana's economic future, and we want to support them as you grow.

Where do you see the greatest potential for partnerships in areas like manufacturing, research, and technology?

There are opportunities across the spectrum, from research to manufacturing and business expansion. India has tremendous expertise in pharmaceuticals and biotechnology, while Montana brings strong research institutions, an established biopharmaceutical presence, and a growing innovation economy. We want to connect those strengths, whether through joint research, academic-industry collaboration, technology transfer, or companies investing directly in Montana. The goal is to identify areas where we can build partnerships that create value for both India and Montana.

Montana has attracted attention for its expanded Right to Try law. What are the changes?

Montana's newly expanded Right to Try law creates a one-of-a-kind pathway for biopharma and life sciences companies to commercialise Phase 1 completed therapies years before full FDA approval, something no other state allows. For companies, this means dramatically faster time to market, early real-world evidence generation, new revenue opportunities, and a first mover advantage in a state actively building an innovation corridor. Combined with Montana's low operating costs, pro-innovation policies, and growing biotech ecosystem, this new law positions the state as the nation's most attractive launchpad for experimental therapeutics and frontier medical technologies.

How important are Montana's universities and research institutions to your emerging industries?

They're essential. Montana's universities are conducting research across biomedical sciences, agriculture, engineering, optics, infectious disease, genomics, rural health, and other fields. Montana State University and other partners develop the engineers, technicians, intellectual property, and industry partnerships that help turn research into startups and scalable products.

This strategic mission also includes a focus on photonics and quantum technology. How does that fit with biotechnology?

Montana offers companies a rare strategic advantage: it is home to one of only five quantum network testbeds worldwide and one of just seven organizations globally that house both photonic and superconducting quantum computers. Bozeman offers one of the nation's most advanced, accessible quantum innovation environments thanks to Montana State University's QCORE facility. These assets create a fully integrated quantum testbed environment supported by federal investment, workforce pipelines, and industry partnerships, making Bozeman an exceptional location for companies seeking direct access to cutting edge quantum infrastructure to accelerate development, reduce R&D timelines, and collaborate within a rapidly growing Mountain West quantum ecosystem. When we talk about biotech, photonics, quantum, and advanced manufacturing, we're really looking at building a broader innovation ecosystem where these technologies can support one another.

You came to public service from a technology and business background. How does that experience shape your approach to biotechnology and emerging technologies?

We know that innovation is best supported when entrepreneurs have the freedom to solve problems, take risks, and turn good ideas into something that creates value. Government shouldn't stand in the way of innovation, but it does have an important role in creating a predictable environment, removing unnecessary barriers, and bringing the right partners together. That's the approach we're taking in Montana. We want innovators and entrepreneurs to know they can come to Montana, build something, and have a state government that wants to work with them.

What is your message to Indian biotechnology executives considering expansion into the United States?

Take a look at Montana. We have talented people, significant research assets, existing biopharmaceutical manufacturing, and state leaders who are willing to work directly with employers and innovators. We're here because we want to learn about what Indian innovators are building, understand what they need to succeed, and offer Montana to be part of your next chapter in the United States.

I am excited to announce that I will lead a strategic trade mission to India to recognise and strengthen our relationship with India, home to one of the world's largest and fastest growing economies. I especially look forward to hosting a lunch with the Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises during my visit.

Montana is open for business, and we look forward to sharing more about all the Treasure State has to offer. During this time, we will also have many important conversations and explore new opportunities for India's biotechnology companies in the United States.