

S.252 - Pearson amendments

Sec. A. GREEN MOUNTAIN CARE AS INSURER OF LAST RESORT

On or before December 1, 2014, the Secretary of Administration or designee shall determine how best to make Green Mountain Care the insurer of last resort for any Vermont resident covered by another health benefit plan, including the Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan, Medicare, and retiree health benefits. The Secretary or designee shall also recommend financing options for individuals covered by another health plan, including using financing tiers based on the level of benefits provided by Green Mountain Care.

Sec. B. INCREASING MEDICAID RATES; REPORT

On or before January 15, 2015, the Secretary of Administration or designee shall report to the House Committees on Health Care and on Ways and Means and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Finance regarding the impact of increasing Medicaid reimbursement rates to providers to match Medicare rates. The issues to be addressed in the report shall include:

(1) the amount of State funds needed to effect the increase;

(2) the level of a payroll tax that would be necessary to generate the revenue needed for the increase;

(3) the projected impact of the increase on health insurance premiums;

and

(4) to the extent that premium reductions would likely result in a decrease in the aggregate amount of federal premium tax credits for which

Vermont residents would be eligible, whether there are specific timing considerations for the increase as it relates to Vermont's application for a Waiver for State Innovation pursuant to Section 1332 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Sec. C. UNIVERSAL COVERAGE WORK GROUP; REPORT

(a) There is created a Universal Coverage Work Group to develop a strategy for achieving universal health coverage in Vermont by the end of 2015.

(b) The Work Group shall comprise the following members:

(1) two current members of the House of Representatives, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(2) two current members of the Senate, who shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees;

(3) the Secretary of Administration or one or more designees.

(c) The Work Group shall have the administrative, technical, and legal assistance of the Agency of Administration, the Office of Legislative Council, and the Joint Fiscal Office.

(e) On or before December 1, 2014, the Work Group shall report its strategy for universal coverage to the General Assembly and any recommendations for legislative action.

(f)(1) The Secretary of Administration or designee shall call the first meeting of the Work Group to occur on or before July 1, 2014.

(2) The Secretary of Administration or designee shall be the chair.

(3)(A) A majority of the members of the Work Group shall be physically present at the same location to constitute a quorum.

(B) A member may vote only if physically present at the meeting location.

(C) Action shall be taken only if there is both a quorum and a majority vote of all members of the Work Group.

(4) The Work Group shall cease to exist on January 1, 2015.

(g) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General Assembly, legislative members of the Work Group shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 406 for no more than six meetings outside of the legislative session.

Sec. D. UNCOMPENSATED CARE REDUCTION; TAX; REPORT

On or before February 1, 2015, the Secretary of Administration or designee shall propose to the House Committees on Health Care and on Ways and Means and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Finance a strategy for taxing hospitals based on the decrease in uncompensated care provided as the result of universal health care coverage for all Vermont residents. The Secretary or designee shall take into account any corresponding decrease in federal funds provided to hospitals as a direct result of the decrease in uncompensated care.

Sec. E. INTEGRATION OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION WITH GREEN MOUNTAIN CARE; REPORT

On or before December 1, 2014, the Secretary of Administration or designee shall provide the General Assembly with a detailed plan to integrate workers' compensation health benefits into Green Mountain Care, including projecting the likely savings to Vermont businesses as a result of the integration and estimating any increased costs to the health care system.

Sec. F. HEALTH CARE PREMIUM AS A PERCENTAGE OF INCOME;

REPORT

On or before November 15, 2014, the Secretary of Administration or designee shall report to the House Committees on Health Care and on Ways and Means and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Finance a comparison of the average percentage of income spent on health care premiums for plans in the Vermont Health Benefit Exchange by Vermont residents purchasing Exchange plans as individuals and by Vermont residents whose employers provide health coverage as an employment benefit.