

## **Testimony on H.69**

**Vermont Addiction Professionals' Association**

**William Keithcart, MA, LADC - President**

**January 22, 2014**

Good Morning Chair, Committee members and guests. I am here today to speak on behalf of VAPA, Vermont Addiction Professionals' Association, of which I serve as President. I was invited to provide a clinical perspective on Bill H.69. VAPA strongly agrees with the following amended version of this bill by Representative Dickinson,

**The Department of Vermont Health Access may grant authorization to a licensed alcohol and drug abuse counselor to participate as a Medicaid provider to deliver clinical and case coordination services to Medicaid beneficiaries, regardless of whether the counselor is affiliated with a designated agency.**

VAPA is a state affiliate of NADACC, The National Association for Addiction Professionals. NAADAC's mission statement is "to lead, unify and empower addiction focused professionals to achieve excellence through education, advocacy, knowledge, standards of practice, ethics, professional development and research." Allowing licensed alcohol and drug abuse counselors in the state of Vermont to participate in the Medicaid provider system without the restrictions of a designated agency meets this mission statement as it allows for parity with our colleagues in other professions.

This Bill H.69 is a very positive step forward in addressing the needs of all Vermonters in seeking treatment services for substance use disorders by highly skilled professionals.

I appreciate your time and thoughtful consideration in addressing this critical issue.