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MEMORANDUM

To: Representative Martha Heath, Chair, House Committee on Appropriations
From: Representative Michael Fisher, Chair, House Committee on Health Care
Date: May 5, 2014
Subject: House Health Care Committee's review of Senate provisions in H.885

Thank you for allowing the House Health Care Committee to provide comments on sections of H.885 that were added, modified, or deleted by the Senate. The Committee appreciates the opportunity to provide input to the House Appropriations Committee and the House conferees.

Sec. E.304 - Human Services Board reports (Senate)

The Health Care Committee supports the Human Services Board fair hearings annual report requirement.

Sec. E.306.2 - Report; value based payment (House)

The Committee has no comment. These issues are not within the jurisdiction of the House Health Care Committee.

Sec. E.306.2 - Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs; transfer (Senate)

The Committee has no comment. These issues are not within the jurisdiction of the House Health Care Committee.

Sec. E.306.3 - Vermont Health Benefit Exchange; legislative oversight (House)

The Committee recommends accepting the Senate proposal for this section with the modifications suggested below in Sec. E.306.3 (Senate) below.

Sec. E.306.3 - Oversight Committee on Health Care Reform (Senate)

Most members of the Committee support this language, with a few modifications. First, the Committee would like to see the Exchange updates available on a monthly basis, rather than quarterly. Second, the Committee was divided over whether it was appropriate or advisable for the Chairs of the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and of the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs to be members of the Oversight Committee. Finally, the Committee was confused by the use of the acronym "HROC"

with the name “Oversight Committee on Health Care Reform” and suggests modifying one or the other in order to be consistent (for example, using “Health Reform Oversight Committee,” which would fit with the acronym “HROC”).

Sec. E.306.4 - Repeals (Senate)

The Committee supports the repeal of the Health Care Oversight Committee and Mental Health Oversight Committee, effective January 1, 2015.

Sec. E.306.5 - Medicaid primary care rates (Senate)

The Committee strongly supports efforts to bring Medicaid primary care reimbursement rates closer to Medicare levels.

Sec. E.306.6 - Human service programs oversight proposal (Senate)

The Committee supports the requirement for the oversight committees to recommend an oversight structure for human service programs. The Committee believes this provision is appropriate in light of the repeal of the Health Care Oversight and Mental Health Oversight Committees in the budget act.

Sec. E.312.2 - Department of Health; AHEC matching grant funding (Senate)

The Committee strongly supports this section directing the first \$1 million in new funds for the Higher Education Trust Fund to be used as matching funds for a four-year federal grant to supplement a loan repayment program for health care professionals.

2% rate increase for Medicaid participating providers (Senate)

While the Committee was not specifically asked to comment on the Senate’s two percent rate increase for Medicaid participating providers, the Committee would like to express its strong support for this provision and urges the House conferees to accept the Senate’s position.