

**Vermont Nurse Practitioners Association    March of Dimes, Vermont Chapter  
Vermont Association of Naturopathic Physicians  
Vermont Psychological Association    AARP  
Planned Parenthood of Northern New England    COVE  
Vermont Association of Adult Day Services  
Vermont Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals  
Vermont Mental Health Counselors Association  
AIDS Project of Southern Vermont    HIV/HCV Resource Center  
Twin States Network    Vermont CARES    Vermont People with AIDS Coalition  
Voices for Vermont's Children**

March 19, 2014

***The above-named organizations oppose a tax on dietary supplements.***

A dietary supplement is intended to provide nutrients, such as vitamins, minerals, fiber, fatty acids or amino acids that are missing or are not consumed in sufficient quantity in a person's diet. This includes all vitamins (from A to zinc, prenatal vitamins, etc.), folic acid, calcium, and other nutritional supplements upon which elders, pregnant women, and others rely to stay healthy. Dietary supplements can help prevent physical and mental health issues and reduce long-term health care costs - a key component to health care reform in Vermont. By supporting a tax on dietary supplements, the Legislature is ignoring the importance and value of this health care prevention option.

Dietary supplements are essential for women of childbearing age. Some women cannot get enough vitamins and minerals in their diet, and more often than not need to take a supplement such as prenatal vitamins or multivitamins containing folic acid for a healthy pregnancy. They are also essential for those suffering from chronic illnesses, such as HIV or cancer by offsetting the harsh side effects of strong medications.

Many elders and others on fixed incomes rely on supplements such as calcium, vitamin D, and fish oil, to avoid bone fractures, maintain heart health, and prevent other illnesses. The added cost, especially for those who are low-income, could force them to make choices to forego some of their supplements or one of their prescription drugs.

**People who use dietary supplements to prevent or manage their illnesses are taking responsibility for their own health and well-being and for the health and well-being of their children. They should not be deterred from taking pro-active preventive health care measures.**