



For Immediate Release
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**VSEA Board Of Trustees Supports The Vermont State Employees' Health Plan
As The Baseline Of Health Care Benefits For All Vermonters**

In light of an October 16 e-mail sent by the Governor to all state employees, informing that there "will be no increase in the State Employees' Health Plan premium rates for the medical plans in 2014," the Vermont State Employees' Association's (VSEA) Board of Trustees met on October 18 and adopted the organization's position with regard to Vermont's health care reform, i.e. Green Mountain Care. Specifically, the VSEA Board issued a proclamation that reads, "VSEA supports universal health care for all Vermonters with the baseline for benefits being no less than those achieved by state workers under the current Vermont State Employees' Health Plan."

In addition, in an October 21 meeting with the State, members of the VSEA's Benefits Advisory Committee learned the details behind the Plan's stable costs and that employees will, in fact, enjoy four pay-period "premium holidays" (no health care premiums due) this year as a result. According to the Governor's October 16 e-mail, depending on which plan option and coverage level a state employee has, his or her combined savings from all four premium holidays will range from approximately \$175 to \$800. In addition, State officials confirmed to VSEA that even with no cost increase and four pay-period premium holidays, the Plan will still enjoy strong cash reserves going into 2014.

"In 2012, the State Employees' plan had a zero percent premium increase and because our plan was so well administered, we also enjoyed a three pay-period premium holiday in December 2012," explained VSEA Benefits Advisory Committee Chair Dave Bellini. "In 2013, it's the same good news. No premium increase and a four pay-period premium holiday. Given that our plan is performing so well and is actually decreasing employees' costs and saving money for Vermont taxpayers, we urge the State to consider the employees' plan as the baseline plan to provide health care to all Vermonters."