

H.207/S.88, Comments and Messages on Publicly-Funded Primary Care, updated through 3/20/15

3/10/15 – 3/20/15

Al Walskey

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

A credible Harvard study estimates that 60 Vermonters die each year due to unaffordable healthcare. As a Vietnam Veteran I learned that healthcare is the most important service provided to soldiers on the battlefield. On the battlefield of life affordable healthcare to all is essential to saving lives and our general well being. This being the case I encourage you to give serious consideration to any legislation that delivers quality healthcare to save lives. In my view H.207/S.88 are worthy of consideration.

Al Walskey

1517 Potato Hill Rd.

Enosburg Falls, VT 05450

Cindy Weed

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Please consider this a priority! Vermonters are counting on you.

It would lower health care premiums for all!

Financing for the bills would be taken up next session, but these bills would create a road map to universal publicly financed primary care. They would keep us on the road to health care as a public good set out in Act 48

Cindy Weed

374 Weeds Lane

Enosburg, VT 05450

Larry Lynch

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

This bill can present the advantages of Vermont to the rest of this country. The advantage to Vermont is not ego feed, but revenue. 1) 50 states: how do you make your state stand out? By demonstrating care for your citizens. Texas may have growing industry, like Rome in 100 AD on the backs of the poor. Would you like to visit Texas' growing industry, the lovely refineries on the golf coast? Or would you like to visit Vermont, a beautiful state where people care for each other. 2) You want to establish a call center in the USA but keep your costs down. Walmart has been making billions off of food stamps and unfunded hospital Emergency Care for years. Vermont can do better: offer a more competitive employment for the low skill worker, lowering waste in medical delivery costs, with better profits for corporations, better living conditions for workers and, in a call center, nothing is more important than how you relate to your called and your health matters.

PS: Want a new motto to attract tourists? "Vermont: 50 shades of green."

Larry Lynch

24 Hidden Cove

Plymouth, MA 02360

Roelof Boumans

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Health care is not a business proposition, but a utility. We all need it at some point, and when we do need it, price can not be the issue. We can not opt out for receiving healthcare services what ever social class we are in. In the mean time there are to many middle man for which healthcare is a business who drive up prices where it is not affordable anymore. So why not make this step towards healthcare as a public rather then a private service?

If that can not be done, why do we need government? Please we do need leadership to help us out here.

Roelof Boumans

4685 Greenbush Road

Charlotte, VT 05445

Jack L. Mayer

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I've been a Vermont primary care pediatrician for 40 years. I strongly urge you to pursue this option.

Jack Mayer, MD

Middlebury, VT

Jack L. Mayer

19 Colonial Dr.

Middlebury, VT 05753

Corranne Claffee

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I support these bills for publicly funded health care and hope our legislators in the house and senate will too. The research is there about the importance for public health and fiscal common sense. Please, let's do it.

Lorraine Claffee

101 Union Street

Springfield, Vermont

Corranne Claffee

101 Union ST

Springfield, VT 05156

Maria Horn

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Everyone deserves access to affordable healthcare. We need to move forward on what should be a right and not a privilege. I don't understand why the "powers that be" don't understand not only the public health and social benefits, but also the financial benefites of preventable services to the public.

Thank you,

Maria

Maria Horn

35 Ravine ST
Shelburne, VT 05482

David Schoales
Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
Please help us move out of this health care quagmire by making progress on primary care reform.

David Schoales
44 Sunset Lake Road
Brattleboro, VT 05301

Wendy Scott
Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
As a retired teacher in Vermont I feel so fortunate to have health care that doesn't bankrupt me or that I don't have to decide between going to the doctor and putting food on the table...which is a reality for many Vermonters. I appreciate what I have and feel strongly that EVERYONE be provided with primary health care. I urge you to pass H.207/S88!!

Sincerely,
802-933-2125
D Wendy Scott
1267 Enosburg Mtn Rd
Enosburg Falls, VT 05450

Jo Anne Edwards
Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
Dear Shap Smith and John Campbell,
I hope that you are in support of H207. We must keep working toward equitable financing of healthcare.

Thank you so much.
Jo Anne Edwards
401 Maple Hill Rd
Johnson, VT 05656

Paul Regan
Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
As you know we being a State of roughly 600,000 peopel we should be leading the nation in a first in the nation of Health Care for all.
Please support H-207.

Paul Regan
Chair - Woodstock Democratic Town Committee
Paul Regan
5851 South Road
Route 106
South Woodstock, VT 05071

Marilyn Hackett

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
Even though this is only a first step on our way to universal, single-payer health care, it would be a first step. Please help this bill on its way to passage. Quality of life and long-term economic stability in Vermont are dependent on a good health care system for all Vermont residents. Thank you.

Marilyn Hackett
602 Middle Road
Franklin, VT 05457

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
Hello,
My name is Michael Gould and I am a resident of Williamsville, VT.
I wish to add my voice to those who speak in favor support Publicly Funded Primary Care: H.207/S88.

My situation is such that I have not seen a PCP for many years. I have been watching the news and investigating the options to obtain health care, but it is very costly. Vermont stands, once again, in plain view of a country whose health care issues need to be addressed publicly and our state is now ready to show the rest how it should and can be done. Yeah VT!

Thank you for your support in this endeavor and for all of the other bills and activities that make our state a wonderful place to call home.

Michael Gould
108 Duke Rd
Williamsville, VT
Williamsville, VT 05362

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
Please continue the very important work of health care for all. Universal health care is not only urgently needed to provide all with health care but, in the end, will save money from emergency visits and preventative health care. We are way behind much of the developed world in providing health care for all. It is time to lead the way.

Sally Hillary
280 Ridge Drive
Huntington, VT 05462

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
I support single payer health care in VT. Health care should be a right for all VT citizens regardless of income. If single payer is not possible I support any and all health care proposals that increase coverage and lower costs.

Andrew Gilmer
25 meadow lane
Underhill, VT 05489

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
Please support H.207/S88!
And please support any and all new bills which point toward single payer health care in VT.

Thank you. Rhoda Carroll

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
single payer means lower overhead which means more resources for patient care. For profit health insurance creates an irreconcilable conflict of interest. For profit health insurance is the worst possible model.

John Oda
2000 post
San Francisco, CA 94115

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
As a family physician practicing in Vermont I strongly urge law makers to pass legislation which public ally funds primary care for all Vermonters. I also strongly support the governor's proposal to increase medicaid funding.

Sincerely,
William Porter MD
Shoreham, VT
William H. Porter
1863 Buttolph Road
Whiting, VT 05778

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
Please take up these bills As Soon As Possible. This more restricted primary care funding will free people from the reluctance to go to a doctor. This will include preventative care. It could even keep people from using pain pills and becoming addicted!
I believe our state, like many other developed countries--New Zealand comes to mind--can provide basic primary care for its residents.
Thank you for considering these bills and including us in your discussions.

Sincerely,
Cheryl Heneveld
24 Daigle Dr
Enosburg Falls, VT 05450
(802)933-8351

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
I am writing to urge you to do everything you can to take up the Primary Care bills (H.207 and S.88) as soon as possible. The people of Vermont are extremely discouraged about the step back on the goal of single payer health care that the governor announced in December. This is a practical, do-able, and HUGELY impactful first step to take primary care out of the profit-greedy hands of the insurance companies.
Almost 1/3 of all privately insured Vermonters under age 65 are now underinsured. That definitely applies to our family. We were on VHAP, but my husband's small business did slightly better this past year, which knocked us off VHAP. Now we'll have to pay a lot for a much poorer plan. It is a system that discourages low-income folks from trying to get on their own two feet. I definitely have health issues come up that I don't have looked

at by my doctor because of the expenses we have to pay right up front. Our health plan doesn't kick in until something really dire happens.

Thank you for your time too look over these bills, crafted by thoughtful and experienced people such as Dr. Deb Richter. Please let me know how I could help you in promoting this bill among your colleagues, Liza

Liza Earle
71 Church St.
Montpelier, VT 05658

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I support Publicly funded primary care. In fact I support a single payer health care plan for all. It is time we stop making the insurance companies rich by taking healthcare out of thier control. Many countries have this style of healthcare and it is about time the US has the same system. If it takes higher taxes so be it. There is a cost of providing this type of healthcare but I think it is worth it.

Gary Curtis
46 Chicopee St
Granby, MA 01033

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

We believe that getting universal health care is the most important goal for the people of Vermont, and we believe that the bills H.207 and S.88 are a good start. We'll applaud anything you do to get them passed.

George Klohck
13 Overbrook Drive
Middlebury, VT 05753

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

As a healthcare provider I have seen over and over that preventive medicine is the best way to keep people healthy. This translates to lower costs and , more importantly, a better community filled with happier and healthier people.

Please keep the momentum going to make this happen in Vermont so that we can join with the rest of the developed nations in raising our standards.

Wendy Goodwin, L.Ac.
3129 Case ST
Middlebury, VT 05753

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I am Vermont doctor who is both a sleep disorders specialist and a family doctor. I strongly support H207/S88 and hope you will do the same. We need to regard health care as a basic right fund it publicly. The private health insurance system which dominates financing will ruin us eventually. In the meantime, too many Vermonters suffer both because of health needs unmet and because of medical bills that they can not pay leading to bankruptcy. Please take steps in the spirit of Act 48 from 2011.

Thank you,
Adam Sorscher, MD

Thetford, VT
1392 Robinson Hill Road
One Medical Center Drive
Fairlee, VT 05045

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I know I've already written you about this, but now I am hearing that funds for the study of primary basic care for all may be stripped out of the bill by the Ways and Means Committee. I feel it is so vitally important to move ahead on solving the health care crisis. This bill is the best chance we have on the table and I do not want to see it die.

Please, keep it alive. I'm sending this message to the Ways and Means Committee too.

Thank you.

carolyn bronz

287

enosburg, VT 05450

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I urge you to support H207. It offers a great way to take a positive step toward reigning in the escalating cost of health care. With primary care doctors for all Vermonters not only will the health of Vermonters be improved, there will be less use of the expensive emergency room care now being used as the last resort for those not covered by health insurance.

Thank you for your careful consideration.

Sincerely,

Claudia Rose

PO Box 873

Enosburgh, VT 05450

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Dear Mr. Smith and Mr. Campbell,

I am the (young) dinosaur of rural family doctor who has delivered many of my young patients and cares for their parents, grandparents and even great-grandparents. We are really struggling. Me to survive on the reimbursement while trying to provide my neighbors and patients with appropriate and necessary care. Together we make daily decisions of which medications to order or not order based on cost. Many of my working families have up to a \$12,000 deductible working for our local Vermont bank. This is not survivable. That is more than many of them pay in rent. They do not come in until they are so sick that hospitalization is sometimes required. I am in solo private practice. NCQA level three, Meaningful Use Year 5, doing all the "right things." And yet for less than 1,000 patients I must employ 1.3 FTE to deal with the insurance and billing. I sit on hold with BCBS and Medicare for ridiculous lengths of time. We need a single payer system that universally provides care to all Vermonters without causing undo financial burdens on our young families, working patients or elders. I know this is a difficult task but it must be done. I currently work for 30% of the salary I would get at DHMC so that I can provide the care all Vermonters deserve. I hope you will reasonable health care a possibility for all Vermonters. Please feel free to come and visit at my office for a day.

My patients would love to feel heard. I am willing to speak or meet with any members of the Committee and plea the case for starting with these first two bills. Sincerely, Melanie Lawrence, MD, MS

melanie lawrence
Newbury Health Clinic
PO Box 37
Newbury, VT 05051

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I believe that it is crucial for Vermont to continue moving toward the single-payer solution to our nation's worsening lack of affordable health care. If we need to raise taxes to do it, let's do it.

David Stoll
25 South Gorham Lane
Middlebury, VT 05753

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I am covered by Medicare and have been extremely satisfied with it. I think that every person, child or adult, should have access to the same care that I get.

Mary Alice Bisbee
3 Prospect St., Apt. 308
Montpelier, VT 05602

3/2 thru 3/9/2015:

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Please take action on this approach to provide primary basic care for all Vermonters! I wholeheartedly support this idea. It would stabilize our economical environment, it would be relatively inexpensive and would reduce private insurer premiums. We MUST do something, and soon, why not this?

carolyn bronz

287 coits gore road

enosburg falls, VT 05450

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

As a primary care internist, I am writing to you to encourage you to take up universal primary care in Vermont. I currently practice in Toledo, Ohio as medical director for a center city clinic sponsored by the Catholic hospital for which I work. In the year 2001, I helped lead an effort to provide universal primary care to all the citizens of Lucas County, Ohio. After months of organizing and discussing the structure and financing of this effort, we proposed financing primary care for all by using part of the Disproportionate Share Medicaid money that was being sent to hospitals in Lucas County as partial compensation for care given to uninsured patients after they used the ERs and/or hospitals for care. We made the argument to community leaders that primary care could prevent much of the need for these expensive ER and hospital services and that it would save money, save lives and was the right thing to do. Newly elected Mayor Jack Ford liked the idea and pushed the hospitals to support it and this program grew into a more complete system of coverage for the low income uninsured citizens of Lucas County called CareNet (http://www.toledocarenet.org/about_carenet/).

If Vermont moves forward with providing primary care to all its citizens, it could be the model for a larger movement across the entire country to give everyone the peace of mind that they can see a doctor for preventive care and when sick without worrying about co-pays and deductibles. Having a primary care provider who knows every patient and their medical history and can coordinate any added care that would be necessary is a first step toward lower costs and higher patient satisfaction. If we could do this for the 440,000 citizens of Lucas County, I am certain that you can do it for the 630,000 citizens of Vermont and they will thank you for it and Vermont can do it maybe the country can do it too. Wouldn't that be a legacy worth leaving to Vermont and the country as a whole. It could start with you.

Sincerely,

Johnathon Ross MD, MPH

Medical Director, Outpatient Internal Medicine Associate Clinical Professor of Internal Medicine, University of Toledo College of Medicine Past President, Physicians for a National Health Program Mercy St. Vincent Medical Center Toledo, Ohio 43608

John Ross

3468 Brookside

Toledo, OH 43606

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

The League of Women Voters of Vermont supports companion bills, H.207 and H.88, which provide for publicly funded primary health care for all Vermonters.

Primary care is the most important step in maintaining a healthy population by treating routine medical problems and identifying more serious conditions before they become difficult and expensive to treat or chronically debilitating.

Publicly funded primary care is cost effective, as little as \$500 per person per year, and removes barriers to treatment – co-pays, deductibles – that prevent people from getting the medical care that keeps them healthy. It will lower overall costs, reduce ER visits and hospitalizations, and improve overall public health.

Please act on these important bills, and give us a healthier Vermont.

Please include a personalized message here.

Catherine Rader

League of Women Voters of Vermont

Catherine Rader

1186 Towne Hill Road

East Montpelier, VT 05651

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Please! This state has an excellent opportunity to lead the way on this important basic right.

Thanks,

-Erik Leo

50 Maple St

Unit B

Winooski, VT 05404

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

We know that it's tough and new to implement health care for all, but it is a road we need to take.

The "basic building" needed in Vermont is "the citizenry." Bit by bit, let us get there and not shirk this responsibility for care.

David Ransom

221 Shipman Road

Waterville, VT 05492

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I work as a health care advocate and I witness daily the inefficiencies and cruelties of the state having to determine eligibility for health access. As Dr. Martin Luther King said, 'Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane.' I have seen horror stories that make Michael Moore's shockumentary "SICKO" look like a walk in the park. And this is in Vermont.

If Vermont fails at Universal Health Care, Vermont should be ashamed. Forcing people to become "eligible" for help, and making it so complicated that HAEU and VHC can't figure out the rules or apply them evenly or even legally, should be a punishable crime so that some accountability can be achieved.

Universal Access would get rid of the eligibility/application horror stories, and would save bucketloads of money. Public financing would get rid of the actual theft and misappropriation of people's premiums that is going on by third party contractors and the state itself.

Please recognize the seriousness of the brokenness of the current system, and follow through on promises made years ago. We need publicly financed universal health care now.

Sincerely,

Professor Laurie Larson

93 Lafountain St.

Burlington, VT 05401

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Please support universal publicly financed primary care, this would reduce the need for expensive hospitalizations and emergency room visits by preventing disease and treating conditions earlier. If we don't invest in primary care, we will be left with predominately specialists, and this will not only be bad for public health, but also vastly increase costs!

Although financing would be taken up next session, these bills would create a road map to universal publicly financed primary care. They would keep us on the road to health care as a public good set out in Act 48.

Paul Manganiello

P.O. Box 1001

Norwich, VT 05055

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

If we can't afford full single payer this year I hope you will at least support publically financed primary care for all.

Bob Perkins

Robert & Thelma Perkins

6 Rachel Drive

Rutland, VT 05701

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Publicly funded primary care is crucial to Vermonters' health and Vermont's fiscal stability.

Supporting H.207/S88 makes good sense.

mimi Morton

ashworth road

guilford, VT 05301

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Dear Health and Health and Welfare Committee Members;

Finally a bright spot appears on the issue of universal health care in Vermont. H 207/S 88 sure do make a lot of sense with respect to health care in Vermont. Catch problems early has always been a mantra of doctors and concerned health care professionals. I hope you, as a committee member, you agree.

Universal access to primary care holds the potential for big savings at low cost at the same time it helps all Vermonters. It just doesn't make sense to wait until easily treatable conditions

become serious, life threatening and very costly. I hope you can find some way to support these very important bills.

As soon as the weather warms up I plan to hit the streets once again to garner support for this legislation. Nearly everyone I talked to in the past had shown support for Act 48. It was very disappointing to have the Governor back away from support of universal health care for all. You as a committee member and legislator can help mitigate that disappointment by moving this bill through committee.

Andrew Pezzulo
Secretary of the Town Democratic Committee Middlebury
68 Seymour St.
Middlebury, VT 05753

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Dear Legislative Leaders,

This bill would make an important first step in implementing universal publicly financed health care for all Vermonters. It would make a significant difference in the access that low income Vermonters have to primary care which is essential to maintaining good health. It would also support our primary care work force which badly needs bolstering.

Please make sure this bill gets full consideration. Thank you very much.

Catherine Thomas
214 South End Road
Mount Tabor, VT 05253

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I was very happy to hear about H.207/S.88. Increasing health care availability has long been the goal of so many people in Vermont and I am glad not everyone gave up when the Governor dumped single payer. I had been skeptical when he took it up as it was never his issue, and now we can take it back as our issue. We can't trust him to lead on it, but he will sign related bills.

While I am lucky enough to have excellent health insurance entirely paid for by my employer I believe there are so many reasons coverage needs to be extended to everyone, and the lower cost primary care is a good place to start if the Statehouse isn't ready to cover it all. I have experienced lack of freedom due to health insurance and having it tied to employment is a drag on people's ability to change jobs, start businesses, or leave relationships. We need to get all coverage tied instead of residency to solve those issues, but primary care will get us part of the way there.

If single payer is out for this year, you owe us to work for the passage of this one. Likewise if a carbon tax is off the table, you owe us to pass a strong H.40. I understand Vermont "can't" lead on all issues (this is often said, but no one offers why not. Yes we are exposed to legal trouble on the GMO bill, but I don't know of parallel threats for these two issues.) Anyway, if we're aren't going to do the right thing, we should at least move towards it and provide primary care.

Damon Lane
71 Peru St Apt 2
Burlington, VT 05401

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I urge you to pass bills H207 and S88 for universal, publicly financed primary care for all Vermonters. As a pediatrician, I have seen how important access to primary care is. Having a trusted relationship with a primary care physician decreases emergency room visits and hospitalizations, and thus saves money in the long term. Passage of these bills will lower health care premiums. Universal primary care contributes to patients' overall well being, in all stages of life. For years, we have had difficulty attracting primary care physicians to our area. These bills that invest in primary care will help attract and keep primary care physicians in the state.

Jane Katz Field
644 West Hill Rd
Putney, VT 05346

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
Dear Vermont legislators,

The fact that H.207 and S88 have been introduced and are under careful consideration is very encouraging. These bills give voice to the prospect of publicly funded primary care for all Vermonters. Universal publicly financed primary care would be a step toward realizing health care as a public good via implementation of Act 48. As Vermont policy and practice, universal publicly financed primary care would advance the cause of single payer health care for our country, bringing the USA in line with policy and practice in the other industrialized nations of the world.

Primary care for all would lower health care costs by treating health challenges early, preventing some hospitalizations and emergency room visits. It seems like an obvious approach to a more healthy citizenry and a balanced approach to a long term goal of general public wellness that can be afforded.

Please do what it takes to advance this legislation.

Thank you,
Ann M. Ross
Via: Ellen Oxfeld
60 Seminary Street
Middlebury, VT 05753

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

At least at the end of the session you can go home knowing you have provided many Vermonters with frontline health care if you pass these bills. Fund a study on actual cost now, authorizing funds for the cost in January 2016. You will be assured that these funds will demonstrate a large return in improved health of Vermonters as well as draw Primary Care Health Providers to Vermont, a profession badly in need of augmentation.

We are having our own mini-hearing on Monday, March 9, in Damon Hall, Hartland if any of you are interested in attending. The meeting is sponsored by Windsor County Democrats.

Ann Reynolds,
Pomfret
POB 1182
Quechee, VT 05059

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
Dear Senators and Representatives,

I am writing to urge you to support H-207 and S-88 for publicly-funded Primary care in Vermont. I am sure you are aware of the very positive health and cost outcomes of such a primary care system for the people of our state. It would also be a relatively inexpensive step toward the implementation of the intent of Act 48, i.e. a full publicly-funded health care system in Vermont, which you passed in 2011.

I have lived over 11 years of my adult life in two countries (Germany and Canada) with variations of a single payer health care system. I know from experience that such a system works. For about half the cost per capita, those countries cover all of their citizens and have much better health outcomes than the US. When will we accept the fact that there are some things we can learn from other countries, and that we don't have to necessarily re-invent the wheel?

Starting with publicly-funded primary care, as envisioned in H-207 and S-88, is a fairly uncomplicated and relatively inexpensive way to begin this process of having health care for all Vermonters as a public good. I urge you to support these bills, and thereby do something very positive for the health and happiness of all Vermonters.

Sincerely

Frank Nicosia
60 Seminary Street
Middlebury, VT 05753

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Encouraging all Vermonters to have a primary care physician who they would see regularly would keep us all healthier and lessen expenses from serious ailments that have gone untreated. H.207 and S.88 are preventive measures we can put in place until we can develop a better universal coverage for everyone's individual needs.

This makes good financial sense.

Jean Hopkins
11 East Village DR
Burlington, VT 05401

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Please support publicly funded primary care: H.207/S.88 I am a big fan of publicly funded health insurance.

Gayle Neave
80 Austin Dr., #52
Burlington, VT 05401
802-864-9514
email: wkogbn@yahoo.com

2/27/15

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

To all Senate and Health care committee members working on health care:

Please start working at once on this new focus for solving the totally out of control health care cost situation in Vermont. We believe that a more gradual approach will provide a better way to change this totally out of control non system.

I still have faith that we can and will provide a sustainably affordable health care system for all Vermonters, do it now, and do it right. Let's not waste all the valuable data, resources and innovative community programs that have been introduced to meet these challenges of reducing costs and particularly hospitalizations.

And please, do it NOW!

Mary Alice Bisbee

Montpelier, VT

Board member, Vermont Alliance for Retired Americans and GMCB sub committee participant

3 Prospect St., Apt. 308

Montpelier, VT 05602

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I am writing in support of H.207 and S.88, two bills that would eliminate barriers to primary care for all Vermonters. These bills would move Vermont forward toward the ultimate goal of health care as a public good as set out in Act 48. Health care costs have risen enormously. Several members of my family, hard-working responsible citizens, have had to forego recommended medical procedures because of the expense. This does not seem right to me. Please do everything you can to see to it that no Vermonter should go without needed health care.

Alice Blachly

4 Mechanic Street

Unit 11

Montpelier, VT 05602

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I am in support of a single payer health system in Vermont. It would reduce the cost and better the health of Vermonters.

Thanks so much

Tom

Tom Pollak

PO Box 22

Bristol, VT 05443

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Please support Single Payer. Unfortunately, it was not included in the Affordable Care Act. But it should have been. As you know, we already have Single Payer in the United States for senior citizens. It's called MediCare. Thanks for your consideration.

Arthur Biladeau

18 N Ardmore Ave, apt 18A

Villa Park, IL 60181

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I'm on VEHI and I'm very well-covered as part of my employment benefits at a price that's affordable to me. As a para-educator, however, I don't even make enough money on which to live. Still, I dream of a day on which all Vermonters have access to health care with almost the same ease we have access to state highways.

Even though VEHI does a very good job keeping down rate increases, school boards balk when discussing the cost of health care when we sit at the bargaining table. I wonder, then, how the State of Vermont would fare as one insurance purchasing pool.

Far too many people, especially young people, are underinsured! I find frightening employers' swing toward pushing people into high deductible health care plans. How many Vermonters have to be rapped by paying a \$5000, \$6000, or \$10,000 deductible before our economy saga under that strain?

Please support H.207/S.88

Christopher Halpin

38 School Street

Essex Junction, VT 05452

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I am an RN at UVM Medical Center. We need single payer health care for our people now.

Victoria Short

43 Repa Rd

Underhill, VT 05489

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I am writing in support of the two bills for universal primary care, H.207/S.88. If these bills pass they will do much to advance Act 48. I realize that there may be some complications with the bills, like procuring Federal waivers out of the Affordable Care Act, along with the never-ending issue which haunts all of our health care reform efforts: money. Yet, H.207/S.88 could help us save whatever money we might spend by solving our eternal conundrum of people incurring vastly more expense because they cannot access primary care in the first place.

I am an example. Several years ago I nearly died from liver disease. I was employed by a Vermont employer. Though I was fortunate enough to have health insurance through them, this did little good when the employer switched insurers. This swap was thrust upon us employees without our consent or input. It is like we did not matter to them. This is not an unusual situation.

The change threw my primary care provider into what, in insurance land, is called "out-of-network" just as my disease was coming on. "Out-of-network" means that I could not access my primary care provider at the insured rates negotiated with the provider. I did not understand this back then; what I did know was that if I stayed with my primary care doctor, the insurance would not cover it. This prospect was too expensive, of course; my liver malady had plenty of time to grow into a life or death situation while I scrambled to find another primary care physician in the new insurer's (an out-of-state company) network of providers. It was almost too late when I finally got one. I am sure that the operations I needed to stay alive were twice as expensive because the disease was not caught in its early stages due to this primary care travail.

Anyone who has been in this or a similar position knows how primary care is so thoroughly essential. Without it we die unnecessary deaths. With it, we can prevent these unnecessary mortalities and save money in the long term which we now waste on procedures like what happened to me for lack of a primary care provider.

Please pass S.88/H.207. I will stand beside you in its course through the legislature and beyond. I thank you very much.

Walter Carpenter
20 Loomis Street #2
Montpelier, VT 05602

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Dear Legislators,

I know it is not necessary for me to repeat why we must continue forward toward single payer. I know you know all the reasons. So I will simply tell you I strongly support H 207 and S 88.

This is a productive step in the right direction and will be so meaningful to so many.

I am asking for your support with these very important bills. We must not lose the momentum nor neglect to make the most of this opportunity.

Thank You,

Kelly Cummings
2070 Kinsley Rd
Jeffersonville, VT 05464

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Please support Support Publicly Funded Primary Care: H.207/S88.

Jeanne Shea
123 Iroquois Ave
Essex Junction, VT 05452

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

For the sake of the future, and the nation, I'd like the committee to take up the bill. Primarily to have a healthy robust discussion about funding. If Vermont can get through discussion and move to implementation. We, the nation, might have a pilot that could go national.

Patrick Christofer Riley
251 W. 136th Street
2B
New York, NY 10030

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Hello

I strongly urge you to consider the H207/S88 bills this year for single payer primary care. It will be the first good step toward to the full single payer system we need to make health care available and affordable to all. This plan will save money in the end by giving access to preventive primary care Ultimately we need "medicare for all".

I watch my son struggle to pay for health coverage that is still very expensive with large deductibles and out of pockets on the Vt Exchange. It is a burden and he may have to drop it. we need primary care available to all. Please take the bills up as soon as possible

Victoria DeWind
659 Halpin Road
Middlebury, VT 05753

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
Please take up the Universal Primary Care bills now. Vermont can and must lead the nation and show it is morally right and financially possible to provide primary care for all. In addition we will continue to have the healthiest population because taking care of yourself and your body before illness grabs you is the best and most affordable way.

I'm counting on the promises made by those we elected and the strong leadership in Montpelier to move these bills forward now.

Thank you so much for your time and service.

Meg Brook
911 Dorset ST
S Burlington, VT 05403

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
I am so disappointed that Governor Shumlin shut down the path to Single Payor insurance. I hope as representatives of the people of Vermont you will continue to explore our options and create a workable plan. I believe there is no perfect plan, and our current system is worse for the most vulnerable of us than our prior options of Medicaid, V-Hao and Catamount.

Darcy Gingerich
73 Bodine Dr.
Putney, VT 05346

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
Dear Legislators,

Please carefully consider the bills providing universal primary care coverage. Vermont has been a leader in Doctor Dynosaur and in social service programs. This would be an important step in providing, in essence, Medicare for all.

George Bellerose
80 Meetinghouse Lane
Weybridge, VT 05753

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
Please do not leave universal health care on the back burner any longer than necessary. The sooner Vermont and all of the USA moves to single payer, the better our opportunity, when combined with other areas of need (i.e., drug policy; education), to restore the greatness of our state and our nation.

Thank you!
Robert New
2 Teenies Tiny Road
Rutland, VT 05701

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Providing healthcare coverage as a public good fits in well with the emerging trend in economic development which acknowledges that the provision of innovative infrastructure, such as Internet access, education and quality of life does more to spur the next generation of growth rather than the old ideas of tax cuts for investment.

Robert Oeser
PO Box 6001
Brattleboro, VT 05302

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

The proposal to publically fund Primary Care is a sensible way to maintain some momentum toward universal coverage and single payer. I hope you will give it serious consideration

John Pierce
300 Christmas Ln
Williston, VT 05495

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Dear friends,

Although I am covered by Medicare, I continue to be strongly in favor of universal, publicly funded health care. While I believe in insuring my possessions (house, car) I am disquieted by the notion that private businesses exploit my health as a source of profit. Our system of coverage for medical bills is cumbersome and terribly inefficient. An inordinate proportion of our premiums pay for administration, including 6 figure salaries and bonuses for CEOs and others. Medicare has demonstrated the potential for efficient and universal coverage. Indeed, my relationship with my PCP physician has strengthened so that I utilize her more actively and am able to avoid more costly specialists.

Please support H.207/S88. Support more efficient health care coverage of all Vermonters regardless of age, ability and need.

Thank you for considering this plea for effective action.

Priscilla Baker
32 High St.
Middlebury, VT 05753

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I was so excited to read about these bills. Please take them up as soon as possible and show Vermonters that we still have the political will and creativity to make single payer work in our state.

These steps are small, but important in the road to affordable health care for all. I thank you for your time and caring about an issue that touches each and every one of us.

Jan Asch
277 Spruce Knob Road
Middletown Springs, VT 05757

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Senator Campbell, I hope you will take a firm stand for accessible and affordable primary health care for all Vermonters. It is the right thing to do, and I believe you are capable of doing the right thing once again.

Speaker Smith, Thank you for once again taking on the leadership in the House to keep our Legislature focused to meet the challenges in an ever-changing society. Don't let the House disappoint us in fighting for universal primary care.

chuck gregory
pob 665
springfield, VT 05156

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to urge you to take up these bills as soon as possible. As someone who has intimate experience of universal health care (Australia) and who currently works within the health care setting, I can assure you that nobody I speak to about the current state of health care in the USA, disagrees with my assertion that the system is fundamentally flawed, broken and down right unfair.

We deserve better. i pay taxes, I contribute to my community and in return I demand equitable access to health care without the constant fear of finding the money to pay for any accidental misfortune that might befall me.

Please move forward on these bills. There is no other viable alternative. Single-payer is the best, most effective, most equitable way to provide the citizens of this state with comprehensive health care. The rest of the developed world already knows it. Let Vermont be the first to say no to profits at the expense of its citizens.

Take up and move forward on these bills.

Thank you,

Jade Parnaby
695 Old Farm Rd
West Burke, VT 05871

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Primary care is where most of us access care most of the time! Without it, we are no longer a whole person but seen for example as an isolated colon by the urologist. Getting up front treatment instead of going directly to a specialist costs more for us all.

Don & Susan Foster
123 Bullard ST
White River JCT, VT 05001

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Two new bills, H.207 and S.88, are being submitted for consideration of the Vermont House and Senate that would cover all Vermonters for primary doctor visits starting in 2017. These bills have bipartisan support in the Senate and even tripartisan support in the House, and would go a long way in containing or even reducing our escalating health care costs.

I can't begin to adequately express my enthusiasm for these bills as a sensible, affordable and achievable way to move forward towards that goal of universal and equitable health CARE (not just "coverage") that Vermonters embraced so eagerly with Act 48.

PLEASE discuss and vote out these bills in this session they are a brilliant way forward on our health care goals !

Below are all the points that so strongly make the case that this is a path forward that will save us money, improve Vermonters' health and move us closer to implementing Act 48.

Please give Vermonters cause for hope in real health care reform starting in this session !

Paula Schramm

1. Universal publicly financed primary care would reduce the need for expensive hospitalizations and emergency room visits by preventing disease and treating conditions earlier.
2. It would lower health care premiums for all! (Vermont law does not allow premium rates to reflect services private insurers do not pay for).
3. Primary care could be financed for relatively little, we estimate approximately \$160 million for the entire state per year. This is less than the cost of a proposed new hospital building at Fletcher Allen.
4. Financing for the bills would be taken up next session, but these bills would create a road map to universal publicly financed primary care. They would keep us on the road to health care as a public good set out in Act 48.
5. If we don't invest in primary care, it won't be there ten years from now. We will be left with specialists, and this will not only be bad for public health, but also vastly increase costs!
6. Almost 1/3 of all privately insured Vermonters under age 65 are now underinsured. It is even more striking with the young; 63% of those aged 18-24 with private health insurance are underinsured. Underinsurance means people do not access care when they need it due to financial barriers. Primary care for all with no fees at point of service would help ensure access to care.
7. Of Vermonters who went to the doctor once in the previous 12 months, most (61.6%) did not visit a specialist at all. Primary care is where most of us access care most of the time!
8. Only about 10% of privately insured Vermonters get their insurance through the Exchange. So, even if we bolster the Exchange, this does nothing for almost 90% of privately insured Vermonters, a substantial number of whom are underinsured, and who would typically access the health care system through primary care.

Paula Schramm

2749 Perley Rd

Enosburg Falls, VT 05450

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Dear President Pro-Tempore Campbell and Speaker Smith,

We urge you to support your committees in taking up S.88 and H. 207 in an effort to continue progress toward universal health coverage for all Vermonters.

As the Executive Director of one of Vermont's free clinic programs, we unfortunately know all too well that our current fragmented health care landscape still leaves far too many people without access to affordable primary care.

While the Governor has put comprehensive universal coverage on hold, making progress on primary care makes eminent sense. Good primary care avoids more costly care later.

Please do what you can to continue to make progress and urge your colleagues to work on these bills and move them to passage. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Peter Youngbaer

Executive Director
People's Health & Wellness Clinic, Barre
553 N Main St
Barre, VT 05641

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I support publicly funded primary health care because:

1. Universal publicly financed primary care would reduce the need for expensive hospitalizations and emergency room visits by preventing disease and treating conditions earlier.
2. It would lower health care premiums for all! (Vermont law does not allow premium rates to reflect services private insurers do not pay for).
3. Primary care could be financed for relatively little, we estimate approximately \$160 million for the entire state per year. This is less than the cost of a proposed new hospital building at Fletcher Allen.
4. Financing for the bills would be taken up next session, but these bills would create a road map to universal publicly financed primary care. They would keep us on the road to health care as a public good set out in Act 48.
5. If we don't invest in primary care, it won't be there ten years from now. We will be left with specialists, and this will not only be bad for public health, but also vastly increase costs!
6. Almost 1/3 of all privately insured Vermonters under age 65 are now underinsured. It is even more striking with the young; 63% of those aged 18-24 with private health insurance are underinsured. Underinsurance means people do not access care when they need it due to financial barriers. Primary care for all with no fees at point of service would help ensure access to care.
7. Of Vermonters who went to the doctor once in the previous 12 months, most (61.6%) did not visit a specialist at all. Primary care is where most of us access care most of the time!
8. Only about 10% of privately insured Vermonters get their insurance through the Exchange. So, even if we bolster the Exchange, this does nothing for almost 90% of privately insured Vermonters, a substantial number of whom are underinsured, and who would typically access the health care system through primary care.

Ken Lesem
90 James Ave
Burlington, VT 05408

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I'm writing in support of H.207/S.88. At a time we all know our health care system is breaking down, if not broken, we in Vermont have the opportunity to provide a model, a way out of the bloated and cumbersome system called medical care. We can streamline access to and provision of primary care for our citizens.

Having been born at a less corporatized time and as a result of very good fortune, I have had good medical coverage. But I see that being eaten away in a confusion of dos and don'ts and protocols that providers often don't understand. And when I visit a clinic or hospital it's clear that many people in this state have not had access to adequate health education and/or health care.

Providing equal access to basic primary care seems a no-brainer in a society that supposedly prides itself on democratic principles. Let's take this opportunity, made possible by many dedicated people, to make something good happen!

Arlene Scully
PO Box 334
Westminster, VT 05158

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
Please take up the important bills H207 and S88.

Thank you.
Greg Forcier
Montpelier
Forcier Duke
12 Mechanic St
Montpelier, VT 05602

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
I support H.207/S88, which propose to create universal publicly financed primary care for all Vermonters, free and with no barriers to access. This is an important step in implementing Act 48. Please put this high on your priority list.

Spencer Putnam
575 Morgan Horse Farm RD
Weybridge, VT 05753

2/26/15

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
We purchased a property in Southern Vermont (Whitingham, zip code 05361) with the intention of residing there in the future. Many things depend on the timing for the move. One of them is the availability of the single payer health care and the other is Internet and cell phone service to remote areas.

Please make these issues a priority in the Legislature. The accessibility to the Internet (along with Net Neutrality) for all of Vermont's residents is something that Vermont needs in order to be viable and compete in the global marketplace. Single Payer healthcare will provide the safety net for its citizens that will allow them to achieve their personal entrepreneurial goals which is good for the tax base.

Initiating both of these initiatives will allow Vermont to grow and prosper.

Michelle Post
1910 Maple Hill Ln.
Whitingham, VT 05361

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
Dear Speaker Smith and President Pro Tempore Campbell,
We urge you to support the bills for publicly funded primary healthcare: H.207/S88.

Everyone needs access to primary care, which in turn can help to reduce emergency room visits and the cost of care for advanced disease which could have been prevented or cured by early intervention.

Please help to ensure that both bills are discussed promptly in committee. It was devastating to learn that single-payer would not move forward but these bills and the promise of free-at-the-point-of-care are an excellent new beginning of affordable universal health care which should be a near-term goal for Vermont.

Thank you and best wishes,
Judy and Michael Olinick
311 Woodland Park
Middlebury, VT 05753

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
I urge you to pass bills H.207 and S.88.

Primary care is basic to sound health care economic policy, used to screen out unneeded specialist referral and hospitalizations that drive up health care costs dramatically, especially the costs of preventable hospitalizations. This bill also enables uninsured people, and those denied access in other ways, to see a primary care provider, rather than having to rush to the Emergency Room when desperate.

I am concerned that the hospitals may oppose these bills. If the bills become law, how will the state permit transparency to have public view of hospital budgets, to compare before and after? After all, the hospitals heavily depend on Federal and State money. There is no law requiring hospital transparency. We need this to have the transparency.

Please pass these bills.

Thank you for your important work.

Margaret Newton, MD, FACP, Retired, Brattleboro, VT (Temporarily visiting in CA)
Margaret (Maggie) Newton
430 65th St, Lower
Lower
Oakland, CA 94609

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Please take up the health care bills for single payer. It's a no-brainer. We have to get it right.

David Ransom
221 Shipman Road
Waterville, VT 05492

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Folks - We must do something about our Health Care delivery system in Vermont. Health Care costs are off the charts - the uninsured are charged far more than those with health insurance for service. We must move our health care system toward a Universal Care System like Medicare.....and everyone misses the Catamount Program.....folks are paying a huge amount for deductibles and premiums - it is bankrupting our State.....Support Publicly Funded Primary Care....let's get moving on this.....we have the smarts, the passion, and the progressive spirit to do the right thing. Health Care is a Human Right....let's move this forward. Thank you.

Melinda Moulton

POB 97
Huntington, VT 05462

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
Primary care for all should be the next step in health care for Vermonters. Catamount has been a great boon for families; parents and grandparents should receive the same care as their children so they can stay healthy to support them.

Thank you for the work you do.

Mark Alexander
254 Camp ST
Barre, VT 05641

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
With the traditional solidarity of Vermonters toward their neighbors, I have no doubt that a statewide single payer health system -- without insurance companies -- would work beautifully and at lower cost.

I would appreciate your support that the respective committees take up such bills quickly.

Thank you.

Arthur Trezise
atrezise@madriver.com
129 Upper Mountain
Fayston, VT 05673

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
It makes so much sense to support H207/S88!
Free primary care would be a boon to the people of Vermont!
Let's keep on the road to health care as a public good!!!

Thank you,

Bunny Daubner
438 Monkton Rd
Bristol, VT 05443

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
please please please can you take up these bills and pass it. insurance costs are too high.. insurance companies are making a profit everytime we see a doctortake a medication. and they make it difficult to contact a real live, helpful, person. i am soooooo tired of this . the sooner the better.

Karen Hescock
13 Beauvais RD
Orwell, VT 05760

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,
We support universal, free healthcare for all and hope you will support the new bills that provide primary care, as a first step.

Regards,

Sue and John Morris
1392 Vermont Route 232
Marshfield, VT 05658

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I am pleased to hear about the new bills addressing universal primary care (H.207/S88). Please ensure that these move through and out of committee. We must keep moving forward. Thank you, Lee Madden

Lee Madden
117 Oak Street
Brattleboro, VT 05301

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Please work diligently to realize the goal universal primary care in Vermont. This is a large step toward reducing the cost of school and public employee benefits and reducing property taxes. It can also have positive impact on efforts to reduce poverty and enable people to support themselves and their families.

Dave Schoales
44 Sunset Lake Road
Brattleboro, VT 05301

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Please see a letter I wrote in support of H.207/S.88 that was recently published in the Times Argus and Rutland Herald.

Two new bills H.207 and S.88 are being submitted for consideration of the Vermont House and Senate that would cover all Vermonters for primary doctor visits starting in 2017. These bills have bipartisan support in the Senate and even tri-partisan support in the House and would go a long way in containing or even reducing our escalating health care costs.

Primary care is essential for quality health care as many small medical problems can be dealt with before they become bigger problems. Once they do become bigger and an emergency room visit or hospital stay is required the cost of care takes a quantum leap upward. When this happens everyone eventually pays through higher premiums and other out of pocket costs.

Obviously any additional tax no matter how small or how many it benefits will be controversial and a factor in gaining public support but it should be put in context. The cost of guaranteed primary health care for all Vermonters would be about \$160 million per year. This is less than that of the newly proposed University of Vermont Medical Center (formerly Fletcher Allen) building. Therefore any tax for primary care would be negligible compared to the billions we already pay for our health care in the current system and would be off set because patients would not be billed for such care.

Primary care is the foundation for a healthier society and lower overall costs, not impressive new medical center buildings. Unfortunately today, many are unable to access primary care including those with health insurance due deductibles and other out of pocket expenses.

Thank You,
Jerry Kilcourse
14 Ridge Street
Montpelier, VT 05602

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

Please pass a single-payer system in Vermont. Please do whatever it takes. The state needs it; the country needs it. You must not hesitate until it is done. I believe it CAN work. I write as one who already has excellent health coverage through my work, but I think it is wrong that health care is not a right. I think it is wrong that I, or anyone else, must depend on an employer, or be wealthy to afford it.

Sincerely,

James Berg
29 South Street
Middlebury, VT 05753

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

It is important that we continue moving toward universal access to healthcare. Thanks for your service to Vermont.

John Bauer
70 Lamoille View Ln #103
Jeffersonville, VT 05464

Dear House Health Care Committee Members,

I am writing to express my support for H207/S88, bills which would set Vermont on the path to creating universal publicly financed primary care for all. I realize you are all busy with the budget deficit this year, but these bills do not require financing beyond appropriations for a study this year. The actual vote on financing universal primary care would take place in the next session.

Why are these bills crucial? Primary care is a small percentage of health care costs, but all studies show it delivers the biggest lift of all health care measures in keeping populations healthy. Making primary care accessible to all would help people avoid expensive hospitalizations by detecting problems earlier. Private insurance rates would correspondingly go down once primary care was publicly financed. So these bills address issues of both cost control and access. As almost 1/3 of all Vermonters were underinsured according to the latest Department of Financial Regulation Survey (2014), it is imperative that we find a way to reduce barriers to care. Since 90% of privately insured Vermonters are not in the Exchange, a focus on the Exchange alone will also not do the trick. Therefore, publicly financing primary care for all is the way to go in that it will both raise population health, reduce underinsurance, bring premiums down slightly (as private health insurance will no longer need to pay for primary care), and keep us on the road laid out in Act 48 which specifies that health care in Vermont must ultimately be a public good.

I urge you to take up these bills this session.

Ellen Oxfeld
60 Seminary Street
Middlebury, VT 05753

2/20/15

Dear Claire and Bill,

As a primary care provider in Vermont for 40 years I want to encourage you to do all you can to further the progress of H207/S88 as a mechanism for giving Vermonters easy and affordable access to primary care. We are the backbone of the medical care delivery system, and comparatively inexpensive. I'm sure many other primary care physicians would be supportive of this effort, as long as reasonable reimbursement is assured.

We must continue on the road toward a single payer and this may be a good strategy to pursue at this time. Please give this effort your vigorous support and help to move it through the legislature.

Thank you for your consideration and your thoughtful advocacy in the past.

My best,

Jack Mayer, MD, MPH

Middlebury, VT

388-9404