

Testimony for the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare

Regarding H.912, An act relating to the health care regulatory duties of the Green Mountain Care Board. Specifically the Lyon's amendment.

Members:

Sen. Claire Ayer, Chair
Sen Ginny Lyons, Vice Chair
Sen Ann Cummings
Sen Dick McCormack
Sen Debbie Ingram

Thank you for having me!

My name is Trey Williams, a physician at UVM completing his training in pediatrics in just a few short months. I am also a member of the United States Air Force awaiting my assignment orders, an entrepreneur, and the Chair of the Section on Pediatric Trainees at the American Academy of Pediatrics serving as the voice for over 16,000 medical students, residents, and fellowship trainees nationwide.

Let me start by saying thank you for all the work you do for Vermonters. You work long hours and they often go un-thanked, so I want to make sure you know I appreciate all that you do especially as members of this specific committee.

As a member of both the Vermont Medical Society and the AAP Vermont Chapter, I can confidently say we are in strong support of H. 912 and the Lyon's amendment. In fact a letter sent to you on February 15th demonstrates even broader support- 12 other Vermont health care organizations signed in agreement-

- The Vermont Academy of Family Physicians
- The Physician Assistant Association of Vermont
- VNAs of Vermont
- Bi-State Primary Care
- Health First Vermont
- Vermont Dental Society
- Vermont Psychological Association
- Vermont Nurse Practitioner's Association
- American Nursing Association Vermont
- American Lung Association Vermont
- Vermont Climate and Health Initiative
- Vermont Public Health Association

Like most providers across the state, we live and breathe in the healthcare system seeing it from many different perspectives, not just a one-sided interaction. Despite our expansive (and

expensive) medical education, providers live in the healthcare system every day- the ultimate form of experiential learning. This type of internal perspective is fundamentally necessary to solving the healthcare problems of yesterday, today, and the future. We love what we do, but sometimes get so caught up in caring for patients that we give lower priority to things like serving on school boards, in health related businesses, local councils, or even in legislature. This doesn't mean that we don't want to do it, though. On the contrary, more providers need to see that healthcare impacts all facets of life and the value of our experiences is often understated. This change requiring a provider on the Board would signal to providers that the State values our perspective and wants us involved.

Provider voices are desperately needed in these areas, especially because healthcare impacts each and every one of us. We need to have the perspective of someone at the bedside- someone who will understand the policy impact of important decisions. Not having a provider on the Board that regulates hospitals across the state means we are missing a vital perspective to ensuring we are not prioritizing cost savings over patient outcomes. Innovating without providers- people who know and live in the system day in and day out- stifles any potential outputs and decreases the breadth of potential impact. Healthcare is much more complex than payment and delivery models. Finally, evaluating projects and measuring the impact of decisions made- essentially quality improvement- is right in the wheelhouse of providers that are doing this every day on the front lines. Taking these to state-wide scale would be an easy transition.

Sure, you could spend months talking to providers getting the full picture. But as a true believer in the six sigma methodology that several of you in the room are likely familiar with, this is completely inefficient. The best thing for Vermont is to mandate having a provider on this esteemed Board. In fact, many other states that have Certificate of Need regulatory bodies have a provider on the board.

Innovation in healthcare is necessary in today's rapidly changing environment and without a provider on the board we are left at a disadvantage. I want Vermont to emerge as a national leader in healthcare innovation and delivery and this would be an important step to that end.

Thank you again for all that you do and for your consideration of this change.

Charles (Trey) Williams, MD