

From: Genevieve Mertens [mailto:genevievecorinne@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2018 11:18 AM

To: Loring Starr

Subject: Healthcare is a human right testimony

My name is Genevieve Mertens. I am registered nurse at the University of Vermont Medical Center, a part of the nurse's union, and member of the Vermont Workers Center. And I am deeply concerned about our healthcare crisis here.

I see the damaging effects of an unfair healthcare system everyday in my job. I have patients who wait too long to seek treatment that their condition deteriorates to the point that they end up with higher hospital bills and a lower chance of surviving at all. I had a patient tell me she couldn't afford to fill her prescriptions because she needed to buy her son winter clothes. I had a patient hit by a car, not only dealing with the stress of breaking her leg, but wondering how she'd ever pay her hospitals bills while being out of work.

We have a solution. Your people already voted Act 48 into law. Act 48 will give all Vermonters access to affordable and high quality healthcare, including primary care. I don't discredit the idea of universal primary care but why try to create and try to pass another fragment in an already broken system? We need total care.

So many other nations have universal healthcare and spend less on healthcare than the U.S. And yet, our people who live below the poverty line are dying younger and their babies have a higher mortality rate than the richer people in the U.S., whose health and life expectancies are increasing.

Listen to the people, the patients, the nurses, the mother who has to choose between taking her child to the doctors or buying them food.

You have the responsibility and the opportunity to do the right thing for Vermonters. We need a universal healthcare system.

Thank you.