

Dear members of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees,

My name is Samantha Ball, I am from Rutland and am the Executive Director of Valley Health Connections in Springfield, VT. I am writing to respectfully ask you to increase the maximum value of our State grant by \$925,000 so we can continue providing essential healthcare services to uninsured Vermonters. This would involve an additional \$462,500 in state general funds, with a 50% federal Medicaid match.

I have had the privilege of serving on the VFRC board for the past 11 years. Before becoming involved with VFRC, I went more than seven years without receiving medical or dental care. This was not due to a lack of trying. I simply did not understand how to navigate the healthcare system or access insurance, and each attempt to get help led to more barriers, delays, and dead ends.

As a two-time childhood cancer survivor, going without care for that long was not just stressful; it was dangerous. When people try to access care in an overwhelmed system, they often encounter rejection, long wait times, or complicated paperwork. Over time, many simply give up.

VFRC exists to prevent that from happening. Our clinics provide free access to care without the delays and administrative barriers that often come with insurance. Our staff and volunteers work tirelessly to meet patients where they are, helping to remove obstacles rather than create them.

Today, the demand for our services continues to grow. Vermonters are facing long wait times, rising insurance costs, and limited access to providers. In this environment, VFRC serves as a critical safety net for our communities, working every day to keep people healthy and out of crisis.

To continue meeting this growing need, we need your support. I respectfully ask you to increase the maximum value of our State grant by \$925,000 so we can continue providing these essential healthcare services to Vermonters.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Samantha Ball  
Executive Director  
Valley Health Connections