

525 Clinton Street
Bow, NH 03304
Voice: 603-228-2830
Fax: 603-228-2464



61 Elm Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
Voice: 802-229-0002
Fax: 802-223-2336

Testimony on Senate Health and Welfare Committee Bill
Mary Kate Mohlman, PhD, MS, Director, Vermont Public Policy
Bi-State Primary Care Association
February 19, 2025

Madam Chair, members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the outline of the Senate Health and Welfare's health care reform committee bill. As Bi-State Primary Care Association's Director of Vermont Public Policy, I represent our members including Vermont's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), Vermont Free and Referral Clinics, and Planned Parenthood of Northern New England. Bi-State Primary Care Association is a nonprofit organization established in 1986 to advance access to comprehensive primary care and preventive services for anyone regardless of insurance status or ability to pay.

For the last couple of years, Vermont has invested resources in better understanding the status of our health care system, especially with the Vermont All-Payer ACO Model concluding at the end of this year. That investigation highlighted severe financial fragility across many health care sectors that has existed for several years and made worse with the COVID-19 pandemic, workforce shortages, and inflation. Our members, including Vermont's Federally Qualified Health Centers, are extremely financially fragile.

As the state considers its next steps in health care reform, Bi-State and its members believe that the focus should be on ensuring access so Vermonters can get the appropriate care when they need it and in a timely manner. This goal includes continued and additional investments in primary and preventive care to improve timely access and patient health. It also includes timely access for our patients to receive appropriate higher acuity and specialty care. Vermont's health care system is intricately interconnected and needs its various parts to work in concert.

We look forward to working with the committee as more details emerge regarding this bill. Thank you for your consideration of our comments.