

April 17, 2015

Dear Senators,

It was nice to see and hear from all of you yesterday during the morning hearings on health care reform priorities for this year.

I am writing because I hope that supporting funding for the cost study for publicly financed universal primary care will be a priority for your committee. Without this essential study, the legislature will not be able to even consider moving forward on legislation next year which could potentially create a publicly financed primary care sector for all Vermonters. This could be the first step forward in the goals of universality enshrined in Act 48, which aims to ultimately create a system in which health care in Vermont is a public good.

As Deb Richter's presentation described, primary care is a good place to begin in the creation of a universal publicly financed health care system. Not only is primary care the backbone of any health care system, but it is also only a small percentage of total health care costs. Of course, creating universal access to primary care is also important on its own, as it has been shown to be the most critical single measure that can improve population health.

Without the detailed actuarial analysis this study proposes, however, it will not be possible to move forward in 2016. Thus, crucial time will be lost. That is why I hope your committee will consider it as a priority this year.

Thank you again for your dedication to health care access for all Vermonters.

Sincerely,  
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