



Towards self-sufficiency...

NH Local Welfare Administrators Association

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January 9, 2018

Honorable Frank Kotowski, Chair
House Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee
NH State House
LOB Room 205
Concord, NH 03301

Re: Support of New Hampshire Health Protection Program HB 1811

Dear Honorable Chairman Kotowski and Committee Members,

The NH Local Welfare Administrators Association (NHLWAA) is a professional non-profit organization that works to support our municipal members to insure that we are providing the basic needs assistance to our residents (mandated under NH RSA 165) while being cognizant to the delicate balance of spending municipal taxpayer dollars. NHLWAA is submitting this letter in support of extending the NH Health Protection Program (NHHPP) because it makes good fiscal sense.

We have a unique situation in NH, where residential tax payers are required to become the safety net of all basic needs of residents without a financial limit. No other state has this dependency on its' local municipalities. While municipal welfare does not pay for health care, we must pay for prescriptions, housing, utilities and food. When people cannot afford health care and they fail to get timely treatment, the results are a population disabled by mental health, addictions, pains for surgeries or treatment that continue their dependency on local welfare and residential tax payers.

Under the Affordable Health Care Act and NHHPP, municipalities have seen financial impacts with residents having this basic need of health coverage. The first direct financial impact of local welfare expenditures is prescriptions costs which for just 13 cities and 20 towns have reduced expenditures by 67% totaling \$195,990 in the first year and in the fourth year we are seeing almost 90 % savings. The second impact, but the more difficult to quantify, is that residents are able to get access to health treatment, especially to surgeons. Some residents are no longer permanently disabled as a result. They have been able to return to work and are no longer dependent on local welfare for the more expensive basic needs expenditures of housing and utilities. Access to Mental Health and Substance Misuse Health Care will continue to reduce the disabled numbers, if not deaths.

NHLWAA understands that your committee has to make a difficult choice as how to fund our State share of the cost of NHHPP. We have had three years to see the strong positive results of residents having access to medical care. This makes sense not only on a current and fiscal level but also on a basic human needs level.

We strongly urge you to consider these far reaching implications for the relief of the local taxpayers and residents and support HB 1811 for continuing the NH Health Protection Program.

Respectfully yours,

Patricia A. Murphy
NHLWAA President

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