



HOUSE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

January 16, 2018

HB 1811-FN-A

Relative to the New Hampshire Health Protection Program

Testimony

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Paula Minnehan, VP, State Government Relations with the New Hampshire Hospital Association (NHHA), representing all 26 of the state's community hospitals as well as all of our specialty hospitals.

The NHHA supports the continuation of the New Hampshire Health Protection Program (NHHPP), which HB 1811-FN-A attempts to achieve. The New Hampshire Health Protection Program is now providing private health insurance coverage to more than 50,000 previously uninsured Granite State residents, and as a result, those individuals now have access to primary and preventive care, cost-effective management of chronic illnesses and life-saving mental health and substance use services. Studies show that it is much more cost-effective to manage one's health on an ongoing basis as opposed to waiting until a health condition becomes a crisis.

NHHA has been collecting data from our hospitals since the inception of the NHHPP. Our data shows that the program has greatly reduced the number of uninsured individuals seeking care in community hospitals statewide. Specifically, recent data (2017) shows that hospitals have seen a 45% reduction in the number of uninsured patient inpatient admissions, a 39% reduction in emergency room visits by uninsured patients and a 46% reduction in the number of uninsured outpatient visits.

It is important to understand the impact this program is having on individuals. Our hospitals and their clinicians have seen and cared for many patients that are now insured by the New Hampshire Health Protection Program and they have seen first-hand how this program is making a difference in their lives and in their health. There are clinicians here today that can speak directly to the positive impact the program has made on their patients' lives.

Reauthorization of the New Hampshire Health Protection Program is a high priority for NHHA and our members. We believe it is a wise investment in the health of our state and its most vulnerable citizens.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments. I am happy to answer any questions.