

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 21, 2017 CONTACT:

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### **Coalition of Vermont Health Care Organizations Voices United Opposition to Threats to Health Coverage**

Yet again, health care coverage in Vermont is under attack at the federal level. A coalition of Vermont health care organizations is voicing unified opposition to the Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson bill and clearly states that its passage by the United States Senate would be a major setback for health care in our country. The Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson bill threatens Vermonters' access to affordable health insurance coverage and violates Vermont's core values.

If it becomes law, the Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson bill will “defund” Planned Parenthood, and severely reverse gains made at the national level by the Affordable Care Act (ACA) including increased coverage levels and affordability, and other protections such as mental health parity. Previous Congressional Budget Office (CBO) reports regarding the ACA repeal found that up to 24 million Americans would lose their health insurance. While the CBO has not updated its forecast for the Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson bill, it is clear that the impact will be significant. Furthermore, any decrease in federal funding through the Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson bill will put Vermont’s payment and delivery system reform efforts in jeopardy. The Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson bill will increase the number of uninsured Vermonters and harm Vermont's health care system and economy.

The coalition includes Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont, MVP Health Care, Bi-State Primary Care Association, Office of the Health Care Advocate, People's Health & Wellness Clinic, Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, University of Vermont Medical Center, Vermont Association of Hospitals and Health Systems, Vermont Care Partners, Vermont Medical Society, Vermont Program for Quality in Health Care, Inc. and the VNAs of Vermont, Vermont Coalition of Clinics for the Uninsured.

Each of these organizations is committed to improving access to high quality, affordable health care in Vermont and continues to work independently and in collaboration toward this united goal. The coalition calls on the US Senate to reject the Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson bill and any other efforts to roll back access to affordable, high-quality health care.

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