

PHILIP B. SCOTT
GOVERNOR



State of Vermont
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

June 1, 2022

Vermont General Assembly
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633

Re: S.285, AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH CARE REFORM INITIATIVES, DATA COLLECTION, AND ACCESS TO HOME- AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

Dear Legislators:

While I am signing S.285, *An act relating to health care reform initiatives, data collection, and access to home- and community-based services*, I do so with hesitation.

Stabilizing our health care system has become increasingly urgent. Our health care system's ability to provide access to affordable, timely, and quality care is currently very fragile as it emerges from the pandemic and confronts the impacts of deferred care, an aging population, a workforce crisis and the historically high inflation that increases the costs of supplies, energy, and staff. With all these factors, the system is at risk of significant disruption and instability.

While I do not believe the Green Mountain Care Board (GMCB) should be in a policy development role, given the fiscal crisis our health care system faces – and the affordability crisis it will present to Vermonters – time is not on our side. With that in mind, I am reluctantly signing this bill so that the resources it contains may be deployed quickly – and in very close coordination with my Administration, the Legislature, and stakeholders – to address our immediate health care access, financing, and affordability challenges.

To support this work, I have directed the Agency of Human Services (AHS) and the Department of Financial Regulation (DFR) to provide active oversight of the GMCB's use of the resources contained in S.285. And I am requesting, through this letter, the Legislature take an equally rigorous oversight role. Because, by working together, we can ensure the GMCB provides a thorough analysis of the health care system and a menu of *specific* recommendations (including impacts on access and affordability) for policymakers to consider early in the upcoming session.

Second, AHS and DFR are directed to ensure full transparency in the GMCB process, including public release of a comprehensive plan design before the work starts, an opportunity to provide feedback, collaboration on vendor selection and insight into progress made.

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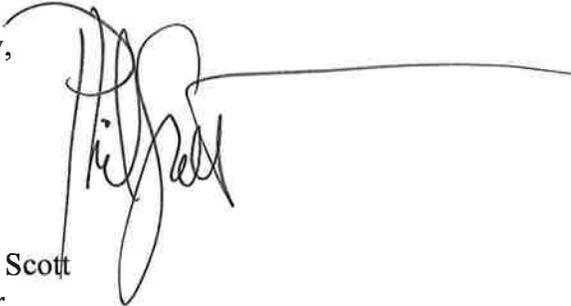
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Third, AHS and DFR are directed to hold the GMCB accountable for providing thoughtful and effective regulation in the upcoming hospital budget and health insurance rate reviews.

Finally, AHS and DFR will convene an executive-level committee of health care providers and payers to move forward with the All-Payer Model and value-based payment reform and share information on the work of the GMCB.

In conclusion, I want to underscore the sense of urgency I feel. It will now be our shared responsibility to hold the GMCB accountable for taking action that benefits Vermonters this summer and in the new year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip B. Scott", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Philip B. Scott
Governor

PBS/kp