

Summaries – MA Medicare for All bills (2017-18 session)

A link to the full text of these bills can be found at <https://malegislature.gov/bills/search>

1. “An act establishing improved Medicare for All in Massachusetts”

SB 619 (lead sponsor Sen. James B. Eldridge); H 2987 (lead sponsor Rep. Garlick)

This bill would create a single-payer health insurance system for all Massachusetts residents. The plan calls for public financing to pay for privately delivered health care to all Massachusetts residents, including those currently enrolled in Medicare and MassHealth. The proposed financing plan would pool state and federal outlays for these public programs, along with additional revenue from a health payroll tax (7.5% on employers and 2.5% on employees) and a 10% tax on unearned income over \$30,000 (to make the funding progressive). All other payments – including premiums, co-pays, and deductibles – would be eliminated. For the self-employed and other employers, the first \$30,000 of payroll would not be taxed. No social security, unemployment or pension benefits would be taxed. The plan would provide comprehensive benefits for all residents – including dental, vision, mental health, and long-term care.

2. “An act to ensure effective health care cost control”

SB 610 (lead sponsor Sen. Julian Cyr); HB 596 (lead sponsor Rep. Jennifer E. Benson.)

This bill calls for a study to compare the estimated cost of health care spending under a single payer system with actual health care spending in the state during the previous year. If the single payer estimate outperforms actual costs, an implementation plan for single payer would be submitted to the legislature for consideration.

ACTION: These bills are currently in the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing (HCF). This committee will decide whether to report these bills out “favorably” for an open discussion and debate by the legislature – or allow them to die in committee, as they have in the past. Their report is due no later than March 28, 2018. Ask the HCF Committee co-chairs to report out “favorably” on the bills this year. Medicare for All deserves open and accountable consideration by all our elected lawmakers!

House co-chair: Rep. Peter Kocot – email: Peter.kocot@mahouse.gov

Senate co-chair: Sen. James Welch – email: James.welch@masenate.gov