



Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing
In Support of H.1033/S.604 – An Act to establish a public health insurance option,
H.965/S.647 – An Act to ensure effective health care cost control, and
H.1026/S.579 – An Act establishing Medicare for all in Massachusetts
By Judith Deutsch, LWVMA Specialist on Health Care
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The League of Women Voters of the United States and of Massachusetts have long supported efforts to ensure affordable and equal access to quality health care for all. Massachusetts has already taken significant steps toward assuring our citizens have quality health care insurance coverage and is now beginning to take steps to control the cost of that coverage.

Because the Massachusetts League knows the above-noted bills are interrelated, this testimony combines our thoughts on all.

H.1033/S.604 – An Act to establish a public health insurance option on the Connector would be an incremental step toward showing what a publicly-financed health insurance system could achieve. It would provide all eligible Massachusetts residents the opportunity to purchase publicly-financed health insurance and help to ensure industry-wide competition, genuine choice, stability and availability of affordable, high-quality health care coverage throughout Massachusetts.

H.965/S.647 – An Act to ensure effective health care cost control presents a method to determine what would be the more cost-effective health care coverage across the state. Cost comparisons of the actual health care spending under our current system and, utilizing a single-payer benchmark, what would have been spent if a single-payer system had been in effect will provide the data necessary to determine which is the most cost effective. If single payer is demonstrated to be more cost effective, it will trigger the process to implement a single-payer system.

We urge that the analysis by which the benchmark for single-payer costs, which is to be developed by the Center for Health Care Information and Analysis, be made available to the public, as well as the analysis of the costs and savings of a single-payer health care system by University of Massachusetts Amherst Professor of Economics Gerald Friedman ([link](#)).

Finally, H.2016/S.579 – An Act establishing Medicare for all in Massachusetts will provide quality health care at a price that all individuals, businesses and the Commonwealth itself can afford. Our current system has individuals and organizations that purchase health insurance paying for advertising, lobbying, excessive executive salaries and other non-health-care expenditures. Medicare for All will also save money by mandating pharmaceuticals and medical equipment be purchased in bulk and at negotiated prices, requiring global budgeting for hospitals and limiting coverage for elective cosmetic surgery and other luxury services.

Professor Friedman has shown that Massachusetts could save \$14 billion a year under a single-payer system, and it is well-documented that Medicare operates in single-digit percentages for

cost-to-care ratios, while the health insurance industry has been and continues to be one of the two most highly profitable industries in our nation. The other is the pharmaceutical industry.

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts urges the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing to give these bills a positive vote and work to ensure their coming to the floor of the House and Senate for public debate and decision.

Thank you for your consideration.