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The Office of Senator Sanders

U.S. Senate

332 Dirksen Building

Washington, D.C. 20510

July 4th, 2017

Dear Senator Sanders,

We are writing to express our opposition to the Better Care Reconciliation Act of 2017. We believe this legislation to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act would be detrimental to the health of the people of Vermont and the country as a whole. We are grateful for your voiced opposition to this legislation.

HealthFirst is an association of independent doctors in Vermont. As we care for our patients in our practices, we are acutely aware that having access to affordable health care improves the health of our patients. Without access to care patients delay care, become sicker, require more expensive treatments that often are too little too late. There is strong evidence that uninsured patients cannot always obtain needed care, even when seriously ill or injured and that having health insurance improves use of preventive health services and chronic disease management. Patients with cancer who do not have insurance present later in the course of their disease, experience worse outcomes, including mortality. Those uninsured patients with diabetes, cardiovascular disease, end-stage kidney disease, HIV and mental illness also have worse outcomes, including higher mortality rates, than their counterparts with the same diseases who are insured.

We are concerned that more Vermonters will die of treatable or preventable diseases if BCRA passes and that a lack of affordable health insurance will result in more costly emergency and end of life care, and unnecessary deaths. We are further concerned, that if more of the patients who visit our small independent clinics are uninsured and cannot pay for their care our clinics may lose their financial viability, leaving a gap in care in many Vermont towns. We support your efforts to oppose this legislation that threatens the stability of the healthcare system. Thank you very much for your work.

Sincerely,



Hannah Rabin

Board Chair

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