

Single Payer Health Care

Mr. Eldridge moves to amend the bill (Senate, No. 2260), in SECTION 14 by adding the following definition:-

“Single payer health care,” a system that guarantees continuous, high-quality, publicly-financed health coverage for all state residents in a manner regardless of income, assets, health status, or availability of other health coverage. A single payer health care system shall, therefore, be guided by the following principles:

- Health care coverage must be universal;
- Health care coverage must be continuous;
- Health care coverage must be affordable;
- Health care costs must be affordable and sustainable for the Commonwealth as a whole; and
- Health care coverage must support patient-centered care, protecting the relationship between patients and their health care practitioners.

And further amends the bill in SECTION 14 by adding the following new section at the end thereof:-

Section 23. The institute shall monitor, review, and evaluate reports related to single payer health care; provided, however, that the institute shall also monitor the performance of single payer health care systems in other states and countries.

The institute shall establish a single payer benchmark which shall be the cost in total health care expenditures of providing continuous, high-quality, publicly-financed health coverage for all Massachusetts residents in a manner regardless of income, assets, health status, or availability of other health coverage.

The institute shall submit annual written reports on all findings, evaluations, and recommendations from its monitoring obligations related to the single payer health care benchmark to the governor, president of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives, to the joint committee on health care financing, and the house and senate committees on ways and means. This report shall include a plan of action, timeline, funding recommendations (subject to legislative approval), and specific legislative and regulatory measures needed to achieve a single payer health care system in Massachusetts. The institute shall post the report on its public website.

If at the outset of state fiscal year 2015, the institute determines that the single payer health care benchmark has outperformed the “health care cost growth benchmark”, as defined in chapter 176S section 5 of the general laws, a process of implementing a single payer health care system shall be triggered; provided, however, that if the single payer health care implementation process is triggered, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services shall, no later than June 30, 2016, publish a “Single Payer health care Implementation Plan” after holding public hearings and meetings, which shall be consistent with the principles of “single payer health care” as defined in this chapter and the annual reports of the institute, for the purpose of guiding this implementation process; provided, further, that if the single payer health care implementation

process is triggered, the secretary of health and human services shall, no later than December 30, 2016, apply for a federal waiver under section 1332 of the Affordable Care Act.