



# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MASSACHUSETTS

133 Portland Street, Boston, MA 02114 • Tel: 617-523-2999 • Fax: 617-248-0881

Email: [lwvma@lwvma.org](mailto:lwvma@lwvma.org) • Website: [www.lwvma.org](http://www.lwvma.org)

Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing  
In Support of HB 338 – An Act to Provide Improved Medicare for All and  
SB 501 – An Act Establishing Medicare for All in Massachusetts

By Judy Deutsch – LWVMA Health Care Specialist

December 15, 2011

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts strongly supports Improved Medicare for All and urges immediate passage and implementation because individuals, businesses and the Commonwealth cannot withstand for long the high costs of our present health care system.

When Improved Medicare for All is implemented law, it will:

- guarantee every Massachusetts resident first-class health care coverage;
- reduce costs to the state, employers and individuals;
- save \$9.7 million by eliminating for-profit middle men and administrative waste caused by private insurance companies who provide no health care and often deny it;
- include cost containment measures;
- be funded by small taxes on employers, employees, the self-employed, and unearned income (excluding Social Security and pensions) and by federal funds already supplied to Massachusetts for health care through Medicaid and Medicare; and
- train people who lose jobs in the health insurance industry to take jobs that will be needed in the health care sector.

I know some of your colleagues, and perhaps some of you, are fearful the implementation of Improved Medicare for All will result in job losses. For those who didn't, I wish you had accepted the invitation to be present in the House Members' Lounge on November 14th of this year when Dr. William C. Hsiao, Professor of Economics at the Harvard School of Public Health, explained how Improved Medicare for All would actually create more jobs by enhancing the amount of health care given, creating more jobs in the health care sector than people currently working in the health insurance industry. I also recommend that you read the presentation, "Solving the Health Care Financing Mess" prepared by Dr. Gerald Friedman, Professor of Economics at U-Mass, Amherst, which has been provided to you by Mass-Care.

During the last 4 years, people in 24 Massachusetts towns have overwhelmingly voted in support of Improved Medicare for All. They know that it is vitally needed. Our present system of health care financing is not providing adequate health care all Massachusetts residents. Many who are covered by insurance cannot afford the co-pays and deductibles, and the rising cost of health insurance is wreaking havoc in state, municipal, business and individual budgets. At the same time, health insurance companies are making huge profits and many of their CEOs continue to receive outrageous salary and bonus packages.

The LWVMA asks that you support the citizens and communities of Massachusetts, rather than the health insurance industry. You can accomplish this by moving this bill out of your Committee, working to see that it is voted on favorably by the entire Legislature and Governor, and then assuring that it is implemented.

Thank you for your time.