

**An Act to Establish the Massachusetts Health Care Trust**  
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The League of Women Voters urges you to support “An Act to Establish the Massachusetts Health Care Trust”

**Lead Sponsors:** Rep. Matthew Patrick and Sen. Patricia Jehlen

In this time of deep economic recession and the unsustainable costs of Massachusetts’ present health care system, it is more important than ever before that you support the passage and implementation of this bill.

**Talking points:**

- Data from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Offices of the Actuary, National Health Statistics Group, per the Kaiser Family Foundation’s [www.statehealthfacts.org](http://www.statehealthfacts.org), leads to the conclusion that with a single-payer system Massachusetts could have saved \$7,384,715,000 in 2004, \$7,827,800,000 in 2005, \$8,297,468,000 in 2006, \$8,795,316,000 in 2007, and \$9,323,035,000 in 2008.
- Through the use of a single-payer system, the Health Care Trust will establish sufficient economies to provide quality health care for all Massachusetts residents at a cost far less than what we are currently paying for a system that provides an uneven quality of health care to many of our citizens.
- In addition to the economies in administrative overhead the implementation of this Act will provide, it will also provide huge savings through the bulk purchase of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies at negotiated prices and the establishment of global budgets. By integrating services and removing barriers to access, the Health Care Trust will lead to early detection and intervention, often avoiding more costly treatments at a later time.
- The Trust will be funded by federal and state funds currently used for health care through dedicated taxes on employer payrolls, employee salaries, income of the self-employed, and unearned income. Low-income earners and small businesses will be exempt.
- The Trust will fund training programs for professional and non-professional workers from the health care sector displaced as a result of implementation of this Act.
- Covered benefits include prevention; diagnosis and treatment of illness and injury (including laboratory tests); appropriate screening, counseling and health education; prenatal, perinatal, and maternal care; family planning; fertility and reproductive health care; home health care; long-term and hospice care; full-scale dental services other than cosmetic dentistry; prescription drugs and medical

equipment and supplies; hearing evaluation and treatment, including hearing aids; basic vision care and correction; and emergency and other medically-needed transportation. There will be no deductibles,

co-payments or other cost-sharing in respect to covered benefits. Patients will have their choice of physicians, other clinicians, hospitals, and other inpatient-care facilities.

The League strongly recommends the following components of the bill be changed in order to assure the fiscal viability of the program and ultimate passage of the Health Care Trust:

- Strengthen the standards for determination of eligibility for homeless individuals.
- Limit availability of coverage to non-residents working in Massachusetts, particularly those who are eligible to receive services in their own state.
- Remove the extension of the Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit for renters and home-owners to all tax-payers in the Commonwealth. We do not object to the extension, but feel this should be a stand-alone bill.

