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Owen Foster, Chair
Green Mountain Care Board
Via email to GMCB.Board@vermont.gov

May 30, 2023

Dear Chair Foster:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Green Mountain Care Board's (GMCB) FY2024 Hospital Budget Guidance.

Established in 1986, Bi-State is a nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization that advances access to comprehensive primary care and preventive services for all, with special emphasis on those most in need in New Hampshire and Vermont. Today, Bi-State represents 28 member organizations across both states that provide comprehensive primary care services to over 300,000 patients at 146 locations. Our members include Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), Vermont Free and Referral Clinics, and Planned Parenthood of Northern New England. In representing our members, Bi-State supports policies that promote the development and retention of a robust and diverse workforce and maximize essential resources for communities to amplify primary care and public health measures.

As Bi-State's Director for Vermont Public Policy, I write today to express concern with the level at which the GMCB has set patient service growth rate in the FY2024 Hospital Budget Guidance. While Bi-State support efforts to curb the growth in the cost of care and limit the downstream effects on insurance rate increases, we also note that these efforts need to balance the sustainability of Vermont hospitals, who are key partners in community health efforts. Specifically, Bi-State has concerns over the impact this Budget Guidance will have on hospitals' ability to address the workforce shortages and to invest in primary care and population health.

Bi-State therefore urges the GMCB to work with hospitals to set a more achievable and balanced FY2024 budget target.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "MK Foster", is written over a white background.

Mary Kate