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**Sent on:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023 11:22:32 PM

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**Subject:** Public Comment: Community Engagement: Hospital Sustainability and Act 167 2023-11-15T23:22:29Z

A new GMCB Public Comment has been received.

**Submit Time:** 11/15/2023 11:22:29 PM

**Name:** Tim Swartz

**Affiliation:**

**Town/City:** Northfield

**Topic:** Community Engagement: Hospital Sustainability and Act 167

**Comment:** I have just listened to the Nov. 15 Community Engagement online session for Central VT. I found it both interesting and depressing to do so. I have been a supporter of single-payer health care for decades, for all the reasons that were eloquently expressed by several of the attendees this afternoon. I didn't feel the need to express my support live, but do want to go on record as one of the many people who feel that the current "system" needs to be completely revamped to provide fairly distributed, high-quality health care which does not bankrupt health-care consumers. I put "system" in quotes in the previous sentence, following the example of Dr. Deb Richter, who did a very informative presentation at the Capital City Grange in about 2006. She pointed out that the existing patchwork of non-profit hospitals, for-profit hospitals, private medical practices, non-profit medical practices, separate health care plans based on employment by large-enough companies to afford to offer those plans, individual health care plans which cover some of those who don't work for a large-enough company, separate Medicare coverage for older people, separate Medicaid coverage for lower-income people--the list of disparate health-care providers and disparate health-insurance plans goes on seemingly forever. Dr. Deb spoke eloquently about the burden this patchwork places on health-care providers and patients. At one State House hearing that I attended, she unfurled a scroll made out of the different forms that her office had to fill out to get paid by the huge number of different insurance plans. Based on all of this, she stated that we don't have "A health care system", we have a non-system. I see (and hear on today's Community Engagement session) no reason to believe that any improvement has taken place. Dr. Deb, at that time, contrasted our situation with the many true public care/health insurance systems sponsored by countries in, particularly, Europe. I still believe that a transition to this sort of true system for health care is the real change we need. I wish I knew the formula to help this happen--as I heard several people say during today's Community Engagement session. I know that there are many people who still believe in single-payer, centrally organized systems, and I hope that the Green Mountain Care Board can transmit the urgency of moving in this direction to the Legislature, the Governor and the public at large. My personal situation is that I am on Medicare, as a 72-year old retiree. I find that this "single-payer" system works remarkably well--not that there aren't things that could be improved. The interest by Sen. Sanders and others in expanding Medicare-type insurance to everyone seems logically feasible, and I hope that is one of the possible strategies which can be pursued to make the change to a single-payer system. Thanks for the efforts of the dedicated people we heard from today to improve the existing "system".

**Post Comment:** Yes

