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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bi-State Commends New Hampshire House of Representatives

CONCORD, N.H. – FEB. 10, 2016 -- Bi-State Primary Care Association commends the New Hampshire House of Representatives for their passage of HB1696, which reauthorizes the critically important New Hampshire Health Protection Program for another two years. New Hampshire's Community Health Centers have seen the value of this program manifest in reductions in uncompensated care, increases in the number of insured patients and increases in utilization of appropriate primary care. Most importantly, the health centers have seen the Health Protection Program help Granite Staters access health care services they need and deserve.

Our Legislature created the New Hampshire Health Protection Program in 2014 to extend health insurance to people ineligible for insurance premium subsidies through the New Hampshire Health Insurance Marketplace plans and ineligible for traditional Medicaid. Health Protection Program enrollees earn less than \$16,243 a year for single person. Those who typically fall into this income range include those working in retail, hospitality services, as paraprofessionals across industries and those with part-time jobs.

Due to the robust coverage for substance use disorder services under the program, the Health Protection Program has regularly been cited by advocates and lawmakers as one of the most important things that can be done to address the state's opioid crisis.

"The House's vote in favor of this program sends a message to the nearly 50,000 people on this program that their lives matter and that New Hampshire is committed to investing in the health of our citizens," said Tess Stack Kuenning, president and CEO of Bi-State Primary Care Association. "We are committed and eager to continue to work with our lawmakers and advocacy partners to ensure successful passage of this bill over the coming weeks as it visits additional committees and the Senate floor."

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