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## NH Senate Ensures Access to Health Care Coverage for Thousands of Residents

CONCORD, N.H. – March 31, 2016 – The New Hampshire Senate voted today in support of continuing health insurance coverage for nearly 50,000 residents for another two years. Bi-State Primary Care Association and the New Hampshire Community Health Centers are grateful for the 16-8 vote to extend the New Hampshire Health Protection Program.

The Health Protection Program is a crucial tool for New Hampshire's Community Health Centers to reduce the cost of uncompensated care and increase the number of insured lives in our state. Health Centers have seen a 36 percent reduction in the number of uninsured patients and a 24 percent reduction in sliding fee discounts and charity care since the beginning of the program. Most importantly, the Health Protection Program increases access to the entire continuum of health care - services people need to get and stay healthy.

"The New Hampshire Health Protection Program truly changes lives. Studies show that Community Health Center patients are more likely to have chronic conditions due to complicated socioeconomic backgrounds," stated Tess Stack Kuenning, president and CEO of Bi-State Primary Care Association. "The Health Protection Program provides peace of mind and one less complication in the lives of those enrolled. Thousands of people have accessed substance use treatment and tens of thousands have accessed primary and preventive health care because this program exists. As one Community Health Center director said, 'this program gives us hope that our patients' lives will start getting longer' ".

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