

The quarterly newsletter of MassCare

# CommonHealth

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## Medicare for All Lobby Day

What an inspiring and empowering Lobby Day you helped us pull off for single-payer healthcare! Over 70 Mass-Care advocates held 20 constituent meetings with legislators about Medicare for All, with dozens more Reps and Senators receiving lit and drop-in visits.

We can already report several big successes:

- ◆ Sen. Michael Brady of Brockton cosponsored for the first time
- ◆ Sen. Julian Cyr of the Cape re-cosponsored
- ◆ Sen. John Keenan of the South Shore re-cosponsored
- ◆ Sen. Jason Lewis committed to re-cosponsoring
- ◆ Rep. Shirley Arriaga, first-year from Chicopee, cosponsored
- ◆ Rep. Rita Mendes, first-year from Brockton, cosponsored

- ◆ Rep. Marjorie Decker of Cambridge re-cosponsored

Many productive and impactful conversations were started with both supporting legislators and not-yet cosponsoring legislators. All the planning and preparation that we've done together really paid off - you were knowledgeable and confident advocates to your legislators for Medicare for All, and they took note!

So far, our ballot question campaign has really paid off - several legislators who were already cosponsors saw how much support there was in their districts for Medicare for All, and are helping us strategize about how we can move this issue forward.

Rep. Susannah Whipp, who represents a more traditionally conservative electorate, was skeptical about support in her district; when the question passed with 64% in support, she was one of our

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Constituents Meet with State Senator Pat Jehlen during MassCare's Medicare For All Lobby Day

### Interview: Massachusetts Nurses Union President Katie Murphy

*Katie Murphy is an intensive care unit nurse at Brigham and Women's Hospital and the President of the Massachusetts Nurses Union, the largest union and professional association of registered nurses and health professionals in the state.*

**Mass-Care:** Why is Medicare for All important to nurses?

**Katie Murphy:** When the Massachusetts Nurses Association overwhelmingly endorsed single-payer universal health care in convention in 1994, we were already witnessing the harm to our patients and our profession that marketplace medicine was delivering with growing barriers to care.

In Massachusetts, the 1991 deregulation of hospital finance and the wave of privatizations of the Weld-Cellucci Administration led to a cascade of disasters, worsening care for all and leading to care deserts particularly in rural and urban areas of the Commonwealth. Our response was to join in the creation of Mass-Care, to launch our safe care campaign

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**Katie Murphy**... from page 1

and to participate in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee to Defend Health Care.

**MC:** How would Medicare for All make the practice of nursing better?

**KM:** Decisions in health care at the local, state and national levels have been increasingly made by those who make the bottom line the top priority. Merger mania disrupted care and closed so many emergency departments that patients suffered. Care delayed is care denied. People still able to access our services are subject to inhumane assembly-line processing. The massive closure of beds in community hospitals created an unprecedented, but predictable, disaster when our current COVID-19 pandemic struck. Too few beds. Too few nurses. Weakened cooperation among competing health systems. Like canaries in the mine, we highlighted these, and offered solutions while struggling at the bedside and in the community to save lives.

**MC:** What workforce changes are needed that would enable us to deliver the standard of care patients deserve?

**KM:** The same economic forces that have limited care, particularly to poor and marginalized communities, have forced care-givers onto a treadmill that prevents us from delivering the level of care patients need to attain and maintain health. MNA, Mass-Care and an array of progressive groups have been campaigning for years to limit the number of patients a bedside nurse may care for at a time, thus improving safety for patients



**MNA President Katie Murphy rallies in support of a union for the interns and residents at Mass General Brigham**

and practitioners. This will foster the return of nurses to the bedside and go a long way toward solving the workforce shortages that administrators are now crying about with crocodile tears.

**MC:** How can organizations such as MNA involve their members?

**KM:** MNA has endorsed and promoted Medicare for All legislation on Beacon Hill and Capitol Hill. MNA has contributed to Mass-Care over the years with resources and cadre. MNA has a labor school that has offered courses on the healthcare industry, its crises and our solutions, including Medicare for All. Our newsletter, *The Massachusetts Nurse*,

has published extensive material on this. At a recent summit of our labor leaders, Mass-Care's brochure on healthcare bargaining and the vital importance of getting healthcare off the bargaining table by making it a social good was distributed, and it was welcomed by these activists. MNA must continue these efforts and intensify them to promote understanding and action among our twenty-two thousand nurses and other healthcare professionals. Other member organizations can do the same. Together, we'll get the job done! **MC**

## Labor Unions for Medicare for All

“For the last several decades, employers in Massachusetts have waged a battle to transfer the cost of health care onto workers. In 2021, workers paid on average \$4,511 for their share of premiums and \$2,850 for deductibles and co-pays. A cost of \$7,361 per year.”

So states a new brochure developed by the Mass-Care Labor Committee and directed to union members across

the state. The brochure explains why establishing Medicare for All will be a boon to union members.

The brochure will be sent to over 1,000 union locals which can order copies for their members or arrange for a Mass-Care speaker. To see the brochure please go to <http://www.masscare.org/labor>. **MC**

**Ballot Question...** from page 1

first signers! We also ran the question in 8th Hampden, where Shirley Arriaga just replaced a Rep who never supported single-payer; Rep. Arriaga signed on just after Lobby Day!

A big thank-you to Medicare for All champions State Rep. Sam Montaña, State Sen. Jamie Eldridge, Massachusetts Nurses Association President Katie Murphy, and Blane Erwin, a South Shore Medicare for All member, for kicking us off at the church and pumping us up to go lobby our legislators. And a special shout-out to the Massachusetts Nurses Association for printing out so much of our Lobby Day materials.

Serving coffee and lunch, space rental, and other Lobby Day costs add up. If you can, please consider making a donation to help us pay for the event at [masscare.org/donate](http://masscare.org/donate) or mail a check to the MassCare office.

Finally, tremendous gratitude to all of you who showed up, or called and wrote to your state legislators; so few people really participate in democracy at the state level, and by engaging our legislators on Medicare for All, you have used your voice to speak on behalf of not only yourself but also the millions of Massachusetts residents who all deserve health care from cradle to grave! **MC**

# 2023 M4A Bill Filed

The Medicare for All bills have been refiled for the 2023-2024 legislative session. That means we need you to contact your legislators and make sure they're on the bill!

Sending email is a good way to follow-up, but the most important thing you can do is **make a phone call to their offices** and ask them to co-sponsor House bill H.1239 or Senate bill S.744. You can find their numbers on the [malegislature.gov](http://malegislature.gov) website.

So far, we have 40 Reps and 14 Senators co-sponsoring. **Many who cosponsored last year are not yet back on.** Make a phone call to your legislators today! **MC**



**Clockwise, from top left: Lead sponsor Sen. Jamie Eldridge addresses MassCare members at the 2023 Medicare for All Lobby Day; South Shore Medicare for All members pose between meetings; Rep. Shirley Arriaga (center) cosponsors H.1239; Constituents meet with Rep. Brandy Fluker-Oakley (2nd from left); House Rep. Sam Montaña Speaks at Lobby Day; In all, more than 70 people attended Lobby Day.**

# Take Action for State Medicare for All!

The 2023 Massachusetts Medicare for All Act - **H.1239** and **S.744** - would create a single-payer system in the state of Massachusetts, guaranteeing equitable health care access for every resident of the Commonwealth.

If you don't see your Senator or your Representative listed as co-sponsors below, make sure to call and email them and ask them to cosponsor these bills. Contact info can be found on [www.masscare.org](http://www.masscare.org).

## Current Senate Co-Sponsors

Sen. Brady, Michael (Second Plymouth and Norfolk)  
Sen. Comerford, Joanne (Hampshire, Franklin, and Worcester)  
Sen. Creem, Cynthia (Norfolk and Middlesex)  
Sen. Cyr, Julian (Cape and Islands)  
Sen. DiDomenico, Sal (Middlesex and Suffolk)  
Sen. Edwards, Lydia (Third Suffolk)  
Sen. Eldridge, James (Middlesex and Worcester)

Sen. Feeney, Paul (Bristol and Norfolk)  
Sen. Gomez, Adam (Hampden)  
Sen. Jehlen, Patricia (Second Middlesex)  
Sen. Keenan, John (Norfolk and Plymouth)  
Sen. Mark, Paul (Berkshire, Hampden, Franklin and Hampshire)  
Sen. Miranda, Liz (Second Suffolk)  
Sen. Oliveira, Jacob (Hampden, Hampshire, and Worcester)

## Current House Co-Sponsors

Rep. Arena-DeRosa, James (8th Middlesex)  
Rep. Arriaga, Shirley (8th Hampden)  
Rep. Balsler, Ruth (12th Middlesex)  
Rep. Barber, Christine (34th Middlesex)  
Rep. Barrett, John, III (1st Berkshire)  
Rep. Blais, Natalie (1st Franklin)  
Rep. Capano, Peter (11th Essex)  
Rep. Carey, Daniel (2nd Hampshire)  
Rep. Connolly, Mike (26th Middlesex)  
Rep. Decker, Marjorie (25th Middlesex)  
Rep. Doherty, Carol (3rd Bristol)  
Rep. Domb, Mindy (3rd Hampshire)  
Rep. Donaghue, Kate (19th Worcester)  
Rep. DuBois, Michelle (10th Plymouth)  
Rep. Duffy, Patricia (5th Hampden)

Rep. Farley-Bouvier, Tricia (2nd Berkshire)  
Rep. Garlick, Denise (13th Norfolk)  
Rep. Gentile, Carmine (13th Middlesex)  
Rep. González, Carlos (10th Hampden)  
Rep. Hawkins, James (2nd Bristol)  
Rep. Higgins, Natalie (4th Worcester)  
Rep. Howard, Vanna (17th Middlesex)  
Rep. Kearney, Patrick Joseph (4th Plymouth)  
Rep. LeBouef, David (17th Worcester)  
Rep. Lewis, Jack Patrick (7th Middlesex)  
Rep. Madaro, Adrian (1st Suffolk)  
Rep. Mendes, Rita (11th Plymouth)  
Rep. Montañó, Samantha (15th Suffolk)  
Rep. Murray, Brian (10th Worcester)  
Rep. Owens, Steven (29th Middlesex)  
Rep. Pignatelli, Smitty (3rd Berkshire)  
Rep. Ramos, Orlando (9th Hampden)  
Rep. Sabadosa, Lindsay (1st Hampshire)  
Rep. Scarsdale, Margaret (1st Middlesex)  
Rep. Sena, Danillo (37th Middlesex)  
Rep. Stanley, Thomas (9th Middlesex)  
Rep. Ultrino, Steven (33rd Middlesex)  
Rep. Uyerhoeven, Erika (27th Middlesex)  
Rep. Vitolo, Tommy (15th Norfolk)  
Rep. Whipples, Susannah (2nd Franklin)  
Rep. Williams, Bud (11th Hampden)

## Join Your Local Hub

### Eastern Mass

**ACTON/CONCORD:** Three Rivers Progressive Mass.

◆ Contact: Kim Connors: [trag@progressivemass.com](mailto:trag@progressivemass.com)

**BOSTON:** Jamaica Plain Progressives

◆ Contact Bruce Fleischer: [brucefleischer75@gmail.com](mailto:brucefleischer75@gmail.com)

**BLUE HILLS:** Our Revolution Blue Hills

◆ Contact Kate Shore: [Kinashore@verizon.net](mailto:Kinashore@verizon.net)

**MALDEN:** Our Revolution Malden

◆ Contact Mats: [mats.holmqvist.boston@gmail.com](mailto:mats.holmqvist.boston@gmail.com)

**SOUTH SHORE:** South Shore Medicare For All

◆ Contact Heather Clark: [heather@rodley.com](mailto:heather@rodley.com)

**CAPE COD:** Cape Cod Coalition for Universal Health Care

◆ Contact Bonnie Shepard: [bonnie.shepard@gmail.com](mailto:bonnie.shepard@gmail.com)

### Western Mass

**WESTERN MASS MEDICARE FOR ALL**

◆ Contact Jon Weissman: [info@wmmedicareforall.org](mailto:info@wmmedicareforall.org)

**FRANKLIN COUNTY:** Franklin County Continuing the Political Revolution, Single Payer Task Force

◆ Contact Judy Atkins: [judithga@comcast.net](mailto:judithga@comcast.net)

**HILLTOWNS:** Hilltown Medicare for All Advocacy Group

◆ Contact Larry Cervelli: [ridgetoprambler@outlook.com](mailto:ridgetoprambler@outlook.com)

### Don't see a hub near you?

Help start one! Contact [director@masscare.org](mailto:director@masscare.org) to find out how you can connect an existing organization to Mass-Care, or start a new one.