

***Disability Policy Consortium  
Boston Center for Independent Living  
Metrowest Center for Independent Living  
Stavros Center for Independent Living***

June 23, 2017

House Ways and Means Chairman Brian Dempsey  
Room 243  
State House  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairman Dempsey,

We are writing regarding the provision (Section 56) to give EOHHS the authority to restructure MassHealth optional services within Governor Baker's proposed MassHealth reform package. Optional benefits include key services such as prescription drugs, dental, vision, home and community based supports, and others. This could impact children, people with disabilities, seniors, low-income parents and childless adults.

We will emphasize that MassHealth already is in advanced stages of significantly changing MassHealth through its 1115 waiver, and also has altered its prior authorization process by transferring duties to Optum, an affiliate of United Health Care. Plans are moving as well to introduce Electronic Visit Verification for home care services, including the PCA program, to also be run by Optum. Arguably the nation's best Medicaid program is undergoing many dramatic, concurrent changes. To give another green light for major system change, and around extraordinarily critical services such as the PCA programs, is a prescription for potential service and care disruption for thousands of people with disabilities.

We ask that Section 56 be removed from the reform package.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

John Winske, Disability Policy Consortium

Bill Henning, Boston Center for Independent Living

Jim Kruidenier, Stavros CIL

Paul Spooner, MWCIL