



601 13th St. NW, Suite 430N
Washington, DC 20005
pcpcc.org

March 1, 2022

Senator Liz Krueger
Chair, Finance Committee
New York State Senate
Albany, NY 12247

Senator Thomas F. O'Mara
Ranking Member Finance Committee
New York State Senate
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Chair Krueger and Ranking Member O'Mara:

The Primary Care Collaborative (PCC) supports the passage of [S6534B](#) to establish a primary care reform commission in New York. PCC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan multi-stakeholder coalition of 60+ organizational [Executive Members](#) ranging from clinicians and patient advocates to employer groups and health plans. PCC's members share a commitment to an equitable, high value health care system with primary care at its base: care that emphasizes comprehensiveness, longitudinal relationships, and “upstream” drivers for better patient experience and better health outcomes (See the [Shared Principles of Primary Care](#)).

In New York and across the United States, however, reality falls short of this vision. As Louise Cohen, Chief Executive Officer of the New York-based community investment organization, the Primary Care Development Corporation (a PCC Executive Member) recently observed, **“primary care is the best way to deliver whole-person care in every life stage [...]** yet we continue to undervalue and underfund it, and the effects are felt most acutely by marginalized communities.”¹

As the front door of the health care system, primary care accounts for over [30 percent of all health care visits](#) while receiving only about 5 percent of health care expenditures overall. This low level of investment lags compared to other sectors of the health care system and other countries investment in primary care.² According to PCC's 2020 evidence report, in 2019 primary care spending across commercial payers nationwide was **only 4.7 percent** of total national commercial healthcare spending and falling since 2017. Additionally, **New York ranked 36 out of 50 states**, investing roughly 4.1 percent in primary care, well below the national average.³

The lack of investment in primary care is felt most strongly in communities facing health disparities (i.e., rural areas, communities of color, communities facing economic challenges). Strengthening primary care can play a key role in addressing these challenges. Findings from PCC's 2021 evidence report further suggest that communities with robust primary care, strong

¹ Cohen L. Commentary: Primary Care Needs a Shot in the Arm. Times Union. January 2022.
<https://www.timesunion.com/opinion/article/Commentary-Primary-care-needs-a-shot-in-the-arm-16804156.php?IPID=Times-Union-opinion-river>

² Willis J, Antono B, Bazemore A, Jetty A, Petterson S, George J, Rosario BL, Scheufele E, Rajmane A, Dankwa-Mullan I, Rhee K. The State of Primary Care in the United States: A Chartbook of Facts and Statistics. October 2020.

³ Kempinski A, Greiner A. Primary Care Spending: High Stakes, Low Investment. Primary Care Collaborative. December 2020.

https://www.pcpcc.org/sites/default/files/resources/PCC_Primary_Care_Spending_2020.pdf

public health infrastructure and social assets had fewer COVID-19 deaths compared to communities with weaker primary care, public health, and social assets.⁴

Increasing investment in primary care is one of the critical policy levers to ensure the health of all New York residents, especially those communities experiencing health disparities. If passed into law, New York bill S. 6534B would convene a collaborative of expert stakeholders to:

- Define primary care for the purposes of measuring spending
- Oversee the collection of spending data from all payers across New York State
- Publish a report on current primary care spending
- Provide recommendations to gradually increase the proportion of health care spending that goes to primary care across all payers in the state

The Primary Care Collaborative strongly urges you to pass this important legislation.

Please contact PCC's Director of Policy, Larry McNeely (lmcneely@thepcc.org) with any questions.

Sincerely,

Ann Greiner
President & CEO
Primary Care Collaborative

⁴ Jabbarpour et al. Primary Care and COVID-19: Its Complicated: Leveraging Primary Care, Public Health and Social Assets. Primary Care Collaborative & Robert Graham Center. October 2021.
https://www.pcpcc.org/sites/default/files/resources/PCC_Primary_Care_COVID-19_Its_Complicated.pdf

PCC Executive Members

Below is a list of the Primary Care Collaborative's executive members that pay dues to the organization and support its mission. Membership does not indicate explicit endorsement of this letter.

AARP

Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc.

Alzheimer's Association

America's Agenda

American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

American Academy of Family Physicians

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA)

American Association of Nurse Practitioners

American Board of Family Medicine Foundation (ABFM Foundation)

American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation (ABIM Foundation)

American Cancer Society

American College of Clinical Pharmacy

American College of Lifestyle Medicine

American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians

American College of Osteopathic Internists

American College of Physicians

American Psychiatric Association Foundation

American Psychological Association

Anthem, Inc.

Array Behavioral Care

Ascension Medical Group

Black Women's Health Imperative (BWHI)

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan

CareFirst, BlueCross BlueShield

Catalyst Health Network

Community Care of North Carolina

CVS Health

Doctor on Demand

Harvard Medical School Center for Primary Care

HealthTeamWorks

Humana

IBM

Innovaccor

Institute for Patient- and Family-Centered Care

Johns Hopkins Community Physicians, Inc.

Johnson & Johnson

Mathematica Policy Research

MedNetOne Health Solutions

Mental Health America

Merck
Morehouse School of Medicine - National Center for Primary Care
National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions
National Association of ACOs
National Coalition on Health Care (NCHC)
National Interprofessional Initiative on Oral Health
National PACE Association
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Rural Health Association
NCQA
Oak Street Health
One Medical
PCC Pediatric EHR Solutions
Pediatric Innovation Center
Penn Center for Community Health Workers
Primary Care Development Corporation (PCDC)
Purchaser Business Group on Health (formerly Pacific Business Group on Health)
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine
St. Louis Area Business Health Coalition
Takeda Pharmaceuticals
UPMC Health Plan
URAC