



PRESS RELEASE

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Governor Shumlin Appoints Pro-Shumlin Vermont Business Owners and Special Interest Business Lobbyists to Give Advice on His Health Care Financing Plan in Secret

After months of keeping Vermonters guessing on who is going to pay for the Governor's \$6 Billion single payer health care proposal Governor Shumlin is grasping for answers from some business owners and special interest business lobbyists on how the state will collect nearly \$2 billion needed in new taxes from Vermonters. Many of those named to the new group, which will not hold meetings in public, are Shumlin appointees on other panels or staunch political supporters and donors.

"The State of Vermont has paid out \$300,000 for the Hsiao report another \$300,000 to the University of Massachusetts and Wakely for the development of a funding plan that would determine who pays for single payer health care, and we still don't know. Now the Governor has turned to a new approach because the answers from the two previous studies were unworkable, and ultimately, political failures." said Vermonters for Health Care Freedom, Founder Darcie Johnston.

"However, several of appointees to the Governor's private advisory group provide health insurance through self-insurance or ERISA plans. These businesses would only be affected by the Governor's single payer health care scheme if an additional tax was put on them to help pay the estimated \$2 billion cost. These advisory group members is made up of Vermont Business Owners and Special Interest Business Lobbyist who do not necessarily represent the interests of the state's smaller employers and individuals who will soon be forced into the Exchange and later into a mandated state health care system." continued Johnston. "The fact that they will meet behind closed doors is disturbing for this reason, especially."

"Governor Shumlin will not tell the truth - that his single payer health care scheme will impose the largest tax in Vermont history on all Vermonters and all Vermont businesses. Worse, he is asking his allies and top supporters to come up with his plan, meeting secretly without input from those most affected by these decisions." said Johnston.

When Governor Shumlin failed to release a finance plan in January as required by Act 48, Vermonter for Health Care Freedom filed a public records request with Governor Shumlin's Secretary of Administration. VHCF sought all documents related to the contract with the University of Massachusetts to help determine exactly what the University had been contracted to do and what they actually delivered. After receipt of those documents VHCF made another request seeking specific documents associated with key meetings, and other items. At the same time VHCF filed a public records request with the University of Massachusetts under Massachusetts law seeking the same records. The Shumlin Administration responded to the second request by providing a single innocuous email. The University of Massachusetts recently forwarded their documents which included over 40 items that the Shumlin Administration was obligated to

disclose under Vermont law but chose not to. These items included 5 spreadsheets, 3 PowerPoint presentations and several dozen project planning documents and emails.

“At least when it comes to their health care initiative, the Shumlin Administration is the most opaque administration in Vermont history,” Johnston said. “When Act 48 was being rammed through the legislature they had no interest in reaching out to businesses or average Vermonters. And while this new group is supposed to fix this after-the-fact, both its composition and secret deliberations indicate that nothing has changed.”

For further information or comments, please contact Darcie Johnston at (802) 229-6107 or visit www.VTHealthcarefreedom.org.