



His Excellency Charles D. Baker
The Honorable Harriette L. Chandler
The Honorable Robert A. DeLeo
State House, Boston 02133

January 24, 2018

Dear Governor Baker, Senate President Chandler, and Speaker DeLeo,

WE, the undersigned representatives of the over 6,000 full-time state workers employed by the nine Massachusetts State Universities, write to express our strong opposition to the recent vote by the Group Insurance Commission (GIC) to make substantive changes to health plan vendors offered to GIC enrollees, and our concern over the lack of transparency in the Commission's decision. The Commission's vote taken on Thursday, January 18, 2018, will reduce the number of health care carriers from 6 to 3 for active employees and non-Medicare retirees (Commercial enrollees), from 5 carriers to 2 for Medicare enrollees and from 6 carriers to 1 for our Pool 2 enrollees.

We share our thoughts about the lack of transparency during the GIC procurement process, the GIC decision to make radical changes to health care vendors available to GIC enrollees, with no public comment, the manner by which the GIC announced their vote, the scheduled public hearings set by the Commission after an initial vote, and the concerns raised by the employees on our nine state university campuses.

We first call attention to the purported year-long procurement process used by the GIC leading up to the vote to reduce the number of vendors available to enrollees from six to three. Our colleagues, members and employees were unaware that the Commission was conducting a procurement review and considering substantial changes to benefits plans available eligible enrollees. There was never any indication from the Commission that reducing the GIC health care vendor list, available to eligible state employees, from six to three was under consideration.

In the email announcement of the Commission's vote, the GIC Leadership stated that their procurement process was "shared with GIC members" through "a series of Listening Tours and distributed member surveys." The commission reported that they received 7,240 of the 442,000 surveys from GIC enrollees during their procurement review. From all accounts, our campus workforce was completely unaware of this survey and the GIC procurement process. We contend that the GIC claim of their process being open and inclusive is dubious, at best.

We also call your attention to the lack of transparency around the actual vote of the GIC on January 18, 2018, to eliminate the three vendors. Although meetings of the Commission are not normally well attended by the public or by GIC consumers, a scheduled vote to eliminate three carriers would have undoubtedly generated interest in attending the meeting.

*Council of Presidents
Executive Office, 486 Chandler St., Worcester, MA 01602; Phone 508-929-9492*

In fact, some members of the Commission did not receive any indication of the vote until the day before the meeting. Members of the Commission were sent their 61- page meeting packet less than 24 hours before the vote.

Following the vote, the GIC leadership informed a select number of state agency coordinators and human resource officers of the Commission's vote. Late Thursday afternoon, these coordinators were directed to distribute the announcement to "all employees within your respective agencies, branches and offices." Included in that directive was the announcement of regional hearings for public comment, starting the next day!

The manner in which the GIC announced the vote, informed affected employees and announced a public hearing schedule, lacked any forethought and appreciation for the nearly 250,000 affected employees and their families.

The nine presidents of the state universities, the President of the Massachusetts State College Association, the President of the Association of Professional Administrators of the State University System, and the Executive Director of Council 93 Local 1067 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, as representatives of our state university workforce, we respectfully request:

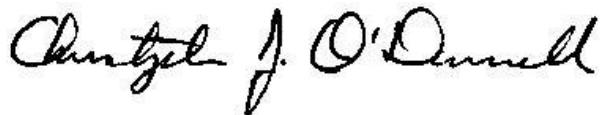
- Support our calls for the Massachusetts Group Insurance Commission to reconsider their vote to eliminate Tufts, Fallon, and Harvard Pilgrim as vendor options for GIC enrollees.
- Consider holding public hearings in order to shed light on the process used by the GIC during their procurement review.
- Call on the GIC to suspend any action to limit consumer choice in purchasing health care coverage through the GIC.
- If the GIC refuses to reconsider their vote, we respectfully request that legislative action be taken to prevent the commission from eliminating three of the six vendors available to GIC enrollees.

Thank you for your consideration of our request and your support for our employees, colleagues, unit members, and their families.

Sincerely,



President Frederick W. Clark Jr.
Bridgewater State University
Chairperson, Council of State University Presidents



President Christopher J. O'Donnell
Massachusetts State College Association



President Sherry Horeanopoulos
Association of Professional Administrators



Executive Director Frank Moroney
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President F. Javier Cevallos
Framingham State University

President Francis X. McDonald
Massachusetts Maritime Academy

President Richard S. Lapidus
Fitchburg State University

President John Keenan
Salem State University

President David P. Nelson
Massachusetts College of Art and Design

President Ramon S. Torrecilha
Westfield State University

President James F. Birge
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts

President Barry Maloney
Worcester State University