Senator Lyons,

As we come up to crossover **I wanted to make sure to send a follow-up on our testimony fully supporting S.197** (link to the written copy of the testimony I delivered in person to the committee on it's website HERE). A big thank you for all you have done to champion and move this crucial piece of legislation forward this year.

VBSR businesses, employees and communities are facing serious challenges in accessing affordable health care. As Vermonters, we all know family members or neighbors who have had challenges finding a primary care provider (PCP). This is why we signed on earlier in the session in support of S.197 with the Vermont Medical Society, Vermont Nurse Practitioners Association, VTAFP, the Vermont Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and Health First in support of primary care access in Vermont.

The primary care workforce shortage is increasing due to stagnant reimbursement, administrative burden, and high burnout rates. At current staffing rates, Vermont will be short 370 primary care providers by 2030. With changes to federal programs, 2027 will reveal new healthcare access challenges for Vermonters — especially those who rely on Medicare and Medicaid.

Now is the time to act to prepare for the changes coming in 2027 and ensure we cut costs for primary care while expanding access for working Vermonters. It is for these reasons, and many more as outlined by primary care practitioners themselves in the testimony of S.197, that **VBSR supports this bill's passage into law in 2026.**

I look forward to continuing to support a smooth passage of the bill to the House prior to crossover. Please don't hesitate to reach out if there's any way that VBSR can be of assistance as the session continues.

Best,
Johanna