Dear Chairman Sanchez and Chairman Welch:

Regarding the recent public hearing held by your committee, the Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts wishes to go on record concerning some of the legislation that was considered. The Alliance appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of 200 home health care and private home care agencies across the Commonwealth that provide a range of in-home clinical and supportive services that help people remain independent in their communities.

We are proud to be one of the many organizations in full support of H.967/S.628, An Act to Protect Healthcare Reform Funding. The bill would create a dedicated fund to ensure that all new ACA-related federal funding to expand Medicaid coverage is used for its intended purpose – to support Massachusetts low-income health insurance coverage, including MassHealth.

The federal government is providing funds to support the coverage expansion efforts that have further highlighted Massachusetts as a leader in health care reform. By reserving this “FMAP Trust Fund” for its intended purpose, the Commonwealth will be creating a committed resource to support its healthcare reform objectives and obligations. Moreover, the legislature will preserve the authority to determine how such funds will be distributed annually among health care programs that benefit low-income residents. Home Health care agencies serve tens of thousands on MassHealth each year and are important stakeholders in ensuring that these funds are met with the proper transparency and accountability.

In addition, the Home Care Alliance is supportive of H.968 relative to a bundled payment pilot program. However, our association suggests that the language should be amended to guarantee appropriate input from the provider community, including home health agencies, on the creation of a Medicaid pilot that mirrors the federal Bundled Payments for Care Improvement program run by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Once again, we appreciate the opportunity to submit comments and your consideration of our suggestions. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

James Fuccione
Director, Legislative & Public Affairs
Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts