

June 25, 2026

The Honorable Governor Maura Healey

Health Care Affordability Working Group

Chair Kate Walsh

Chair Lisa Murray

Dear Governor Healey, Chairwoman Walsh and Chairwoman Murray,

We are a coalition of employers and business groups struggling with the unsustainable cost of health care in Massachusetts. We are writing to express our strong support for your Health Care Affordability Working Group, and to underscore the urgency of delivering meaningful, sustainable solutions to rising costs.

Our Commonwealth is facing an affordability crisis. It is among the most expensive states in the nation, driven by high housing costs, rising energy expenses, and, increasingly, the escalating cost of health care. These pressures directly impact our ability to invest in our workforce, grow our operations, and remain competitive in New England and nationally.

Massachusetts has among the most expensive health care in the world. Our premiums are the highest in the country. And those costs are rising at an unsustainable rate. Spending on hospitals, physicians, and pharmacy services has been growing at the fastest rate in nearly two decades, exceeding regional inflation and wage increases. New breakthrough drugs and procedures come with sky-high price tags that put costs further out of reach.

In recent years, we have seen the passage of many health care policies aimed at increasing access to new treatments and provider types, expanding coverage for services and medications, and limiting out-of-pocket costs for patients. However, the last meaningful attempt at addressing the underlying cost of care was in 2012 with the creation of the health care cost benchmark. While initially showing promise, that tool has proven ineffective in recent years, with the Commonwealth exceeding the benchmark every year since the pandemic.

This is not an abstract issue for employers—it is a central business concern. And it requires more than a band aid or short-term fix. It is essential that the Working Group confront long-standing issues related to provider pricing and pharmaceutical costs. These factors represent core contributors to health care spending and must be central to any meaningful reform effort.

Public and private payers must be given the tools and flexibility necessary to negotiate effectively, promote high-value care, and implement benefit designs that encourage affordability and access. Efforts to reduce administrative burden can also complement—but cannot substitute for—more direct action on the primary drivers of overall health care spending.

Finally, we urge the Working Group to consider the broader implications of health care costs on the Commonwealth's economic competitiveness. If left unaddressed, rising health care costs will continue to place Massachusetts employers at a disadvantage, impact job growth, investment, and long-term economic vitality.

We appreciate your leadership on this issue and look forward to the Working Group's recommendations. Employers stand ready to support thoughtful, balanced reforms that address the root causes of health care cost growth and ensure a more affordable future for Massachusetts residents and employers.

Sincerely,

*Bret Goldberg*

Sr. Human Resources Director  
The Greater Boston Food Bank

*Tom Gardner*

SVP, Operations & Human Resources  
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*Bill Hurley*

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*Eric Gallo*

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cc. Amy Rosenthal, Undersecretary for Health and Human Services

Michael Caljouw, Commissioner Division of Insurance

Sarah Sabshon, Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy & Cabinet Affairs