

# STATEMENT FROM HEALTH CARE FOR ALL AND HEALTH LAW ADVOCATES REGARDING BALLOT QUESTION 1

*October 24, 2018*



Health Care For All and Health Law Advocates represent the needs of consumers in the health care system. As organizations focused on coverage, access, and affordability, we are concerned that Ballot Question 1 could have unintended consequences. Our goal is to ensure that consumers can make an informed decision about this question.

Meeting the proposed nurse staffing ratios could be particularly challenging for community-based hospitals, community health centers, and safety-net hospitals that disproportionately serve people of color, immigrants, and low-income families. It could put pressure on our behavioral health system, which is already experiencing significant staffing shortages, and could further reduce access to care. In addition, the Massachusetts Health Policy Commission projects an additional \$676 million to \$949 million annual cost to the health care system if the initiative passes. These costs may ultimately be passed on to consumers in the form of higher premiums and out-of-pocket expenses.

Health Care For All will continue to advocate for health justice in Massachusetts by promoting health equity and ensuring coverage and access for all. Health Law Advocates will continue to provide pro bono legal representation to low-income residents experiencing difficulty accessing or paying for needed medical services.