

By Mrs. Teahan of Whitman, petition of Kathleen M. Teahan and other members of the House relative to uncompensated care pools for acute care hospitals. Health Care.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Three.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO ACUTE HOSPITALS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 118G of the General Laws is hereby
2 amended by striking out section 18 and 18A and inserting in place
3 thereof the following section:—

4 Section 18. Commencing with fiscal year 2004, acute care hos-
5 pitals shall be exempt from any requirement to contribute any
6 amount to uncompensated care pools of any type. Hospitals shall
7 continue to care for all who seek care that they can provide
8 regardless of patient's ability to pay.

9 An Uncompensated Care Trust Fund shall be established for
10 those acute care hospitals and community health centers who can
11 demonstrate extreme hardship and challenges to their organiza-
12 tional viability because of the burden of caring for the poor and
13 uninsured. These hospitals and community health centers would
14 periodically make application to the Uncompensated Care Trust
15 Fund based on established criteria defining hardship.

16 A maximum of 10 percent of the funding needed by the Trust
17 Fund would come from financial assessments on employers with
18 20 or more employees who work a minimum of 20 hours per week
19 and who do not provide employee health insurance. The
20 remaining funding shall come from the commonwealth, subject to
21 appropriation and from any available federal funding. The com-
22 monwealth shall not use the trust funds dollars and federal
23 matching funds for purposes other than uncompensated care pay-

24 ments to those acute care hospitals and community health centers
25 that meet fund reimbursement criteria.

1 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect as of July 1, 2003.