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MEMORANDUM IN OPPOSITION

January 13, 2022

To: Members of the Hudson Valley Delegation of the New York State Legislature
From: Michael N. Romita, President & CEO of the Westchester County Association
Re: S5474 (Rivera) / A6058 (Gottfried) "New York Health Act"

BILL SUMMARY: This bill would enact the New York Health Act establishing a statewide universal single payer health plan.

The Westchester County Association ("WCA") is a professional membership organization comprising a diverse group of businesses and nonprofits that rely on us to advocate for policies and laws to foster economic development in the region and meet the needs of our communities. WCA's members include hundreds of the region's foremost organizations in industries as diverse as healthcare, real estate, finance, law, energy, technology, hospitality, and higher education which collectively employ hundreds of thousands of workers. Amongst the WCA's primary focus areas for a stronger regional economy is encouraging a strong and vibrant healthcare community. As such, the WCA regularly engages with government representatives to ensure that healthcare remains at the center of policy discourse.

The WCA strongly opposes the New York Health Act legislation as do most of the healthcare providers and businesses in our region. New York State has been steadily losing businesses and high-income residents, and this will only exacerbate that trend. A single payer healthcare system just for the state of New York would prove extremely burdensome to employers and employees, many of whom work in one state but live and/or seek medical care in a neighboring state. According to a RAND Corporation study, such a program would require an additional \$139 billion in new tax revenue. This is a price tag which struggling businesses and residents cannot afford.

While the for-profit managed care industry wields excessive market power vis-à-vis providers, employers and consumers, the NY Health Act is not the answer. The WCA recommends adoption of the recently published report of the Health Care Administrative Simplification Workgroup https://www.dfs.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/10/admin_simplification_workgroup_report_20211003.pdf, which had been required through the enactment of the FY2021 budget. This report represents a consensus body of work of many stakeholders including providers, payers and consumers.

The New York Health Act as proposed would destabilize the healthcare industry when they can least afford it while simultaneously jeopardizing access to quality healthcare services for New York residents and businesses.

For these reasons, the Westchester County Association strongly opposes this legislation.