

**Task Force on the Federal Transition
Facilitator Script**

March 6, 2025, 2:00 - 3:30pm

2:00pm – 2:10pm Taking Stock & Latest Developments: Tariffs
Treasurer Pieciak, Co-Chair Minter

Treasurer welcomes task force members, guests Monica Ogelby and Dan Smith.

- Another busy couple weeks. Notes tariffs in the news quite a bit the last few days...changing even since this morning, underscoring the confusion caused to so many businesses and organizations.
- Notes further some of our past focus on Medicaid may well be warranted as a bill with significant proposed cuts to Medicaid (as well as higher ed, SNAP, and other areas) has advanced from the House to the Senate
 - Grateful to be joined today by Monica Ogelby, Medicaid Director for the State of Vermont, to talk further about this risk
- Highlights upcoming opportunities as a result of these task force conversations:
 - First, the webinar we mentioned at our last meeting on helping employers navigate uncertainty, will happen on March 11.
 - Second, we'll be organizing two "town halls" on March 15, one in Brattleboro and one in Burlington. These town halls will do a couple things.
 - Share what we are doing as a Task Force with people, and create space for are legislators to update on their actions as well.
 - And make space for gathering in community and building or strengthening relationships can be strengthening

Co-Chair Minter

- Welcomes folks back, discusses town meeting day.
- Introduces Monica Ogelby, who has an impressive background as a prior director of the State's immunization program. Also a nurse, working as the Pediatric Palliative Care Nurse Program Coordinator within VDH, the UVM Health Network, and prior to that, working for 4 years as a critical care nurse at Boston Children's Hospital.

2:10pm – 2:45pm Discussion with Monica Ogelby, State Medicaid Director
Areas of focus with Federal transition; risks to Medicaid posed by potential Congressional action and proactive planning

Monica outlines how Medicaid works in Vermont at a high level, noting the ways it supports schools and hospitals beyond direct health care provision. She distinguishes between different Medicaid reimbursement rates across program types (i.e., adult expansion rate vice other programs).

Monica outlines current potential spending cuts under consideration at the federal level, emphasizing it is not possible to know what pathway or specific cut will be pursued. The State is tracking these conversations carefully.

Task Force questions focused on current top possibilities for Medicaid reductions – including FMAP reductions, work requirements, or a possible per member cap (based on formula not yet known).

The discussion focused on the impact of reductions – to those directly affected, in terms of total federal dollars at risk, in terms of impact on employers as employees lose Medicaid coverage, and in terms of where those reductions may actually occur. Again, it is too early to know for sure. If the new Congress decided to focus on adults covered by Medicaid expansion, that could impact ~60,000 people in Vermont.

Monica also discussed various carve out models with work requirements, noting the Mississippi model. She noted that for carve out discussions and for other elements of these potential cuts, she would want to engage the Legislature as well. She noted that, different from the current President's executive actions, these potential changes would be Congressional if enacted and have potentially greater durability.

The Task Force discussed 1115 Waivers, risks, the latitude generated by that waiver, and how changes impact the budgets of operating organizations providing vital social service and healthcare for many in Vermont.

2:45pm – 3:15pm Discussion with Dan Smith, CEO of the VT Community Foundation
Observations at the Federal level and impacts in Vermont; priorities and considerations for the future

The Treasurer introduced Dan Smith, noting in particular how VCF has stepped forward during the pandemic and again after the terrible flooding. Dan noted those experiences have also somewhat reduced the latitude VCF has to respond.

Dan outlined how VCF is already organizing to think through the new crisis: First order impacted organizations, dependent on federal funds that may be suddenly at risk. Second order organizations, with partial federal exposure and program risk, and third order impacts, tied to cuts in areas like Medicaid or federal funds the State relies on. These might be organizations that rely on State general funds to provide vital social services. There are also third order tariff impacts.

VCF is thinking a lot about non-profit capacity, technical assistance, and using resources deliberately with long term trade-offs as well as short term needs in mind. VCF is also tracking a variety of potential federal policy changes as well.

Dan sees this as further evidence that we need to look at the fundamental challenges – housing, demographics, climate – in the state that take longer to solve while also holding our values and spending money locally where it can make the greatest impact.

3:15pm - 3:25pm Task Force Review & Look Ahead

Task Force reflected on the discussion today. Considering calling an informal, sub-group meeting later this month to articulate potential areas of focus for a new era and what form that should take.

Continued focus on these issues... Medicaid, CR, Congressional cuts, capricious federal policy (since U.S. tariff policy changed again during the meeting vis-à-vis Canada).

3:25pm - 3:30pm Public Comment

Joanne O'Connor supported the Town Hall concept, invited the Treasurer to Manchester.

Indivisible St. Johnsbury also invited a Town Hall in St. J.

3:30pm Adjourn