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**STATE OF MAINE**

**ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTIETH LEGISLATURE**

**HEALTH CARE SYSTEM AND HEALTH SECURITY BOARD**

***News Release***

***For Immediate Release***

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**Maine Nurses Giving Money to Support Feasibility Study of Single-payer System**

The Health Care System and Health Security Board, established by the Maine Legislature to examine the costs of a single-payer health care system, has received a \$1000 gift from the Maine Nurse Practitioners Association. This gift is in addition to previous donations of \$5000 from the Maine State Nurses Association and \$500 from the Maine Nurse Midwives Association. "Nurses believe in universal health care," said Patricia Philbrook, Executive Director of the Maine State Nurses Association and member of the Health Security Board. "Every patient deserves a nurse." Ms. Philbrook presented the check to the Board's chairs, Senator John Martin and Representative Paul Volenik, at a recent meeting.

The Health Security Board is actively raising funds to support a feasibility study of the financial and economic impact of a single-payer system on individuals and businesses. To date, the Board has raised over \$34,000 and is waiting for a final decision on a grant proposal for \$200,000 from the Maine Health Access Foundation.

The Health Security Board is a bipartisan task force whose purpose is to "develop recommendations to provide health care coverage to all citizens of this State through a plan or plans that emphasize 24-hour coverage, quality, cost containment, choice of provider and access to comprehensive, preventive and long-term care." The Health Security Board has 19 members including representatives of both branches and both parties within the Legislature, the Department of Human Services, the State Employee Health Commission and the State Tax Assessor and representatives of provider organizations, employers, insurers and advocacy groups. The Board will make its full report to the Legislature in December 2002.

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