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## Pioneer Institute Draws Lessons from the Connector and Utah's Health Insurance Exchange

BOSTON – [\*Drawing Lessons: Different Results from State Health Insurance Exchanges\*](#), a new report commissioned by Pioneer Institute, examines the design and implementation of health insurance exchanges in Massachusetts and Utah. The report finds very different results from each and provides clear, practical lessons for political and policy leaders. It also highlights the success and failures of state health insurance exchanges, a critical topic as federal officials debate the nature of national health reform.

“National attention has been on the public option,” says Jim Stergios, executive director of Pioneer Institute. “But while federal reform proposals all include some form of health insurance exchange, no one’s looking at the state experiments to see what has and hasn’t worked. Details matter – seemingly small operational decisions about a health insurance exchange will have large, costly consequences.”

*Drawing Lessons* is authored by Amy Lischko, DSc, assistant professor of Public Health and Community Medicine at Tufts Medical School. Ms. Lischko has over fifteen years of experience working for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, most recently as Director of Health Care Policy and Commissioner of the Division of Health Care Finance and Policy under Governor Romney. Amy holds a doctorate degree in health services research from Boston University and was one of the key authors of the administration’s health care reform proposal.

“The design and implementation of exchanges have a profound impact on spending, coverage, and sustainability of the reform,” says Lischko. “Some decisions made while implementing the exchange model in Massachusetts, for example, have meant that the Connector has not met the needs of small employers in Massachusetts well.”

### The Series

This report acts as a precursor for Pioneer’s upcoming *Interim Report Card* series on health care reform, which will examine various aspects of Massachusetts’ health care reform, including access, financing and affordability, administration, and cost-effective quality of care. This will constitute the first attempt to provide a comprehensive assessment of the Massachusetts reform.

The *Interim Report Card* brings level-headed analysis and data from Massachusetts and other state experiments in health reform to the federal debate on health care reform.

“The tone and substance of current federal proposals does not remotely resemble the quality of dialogue we need,” says Stergios. “Our aim is to inject empirical consideration of what has

worked into the D.C. debates, which have abandoned the initial principles of cost containment and devolved into a power play.”

### **Pioneer’s Position on Health Care Reform**

Pioneer believes that national health care reform efforts are premature. State-level experimentation is at an early stage. We will need a variety of experiments to test ideas and policy frameworks. This is the proper role of the states to act as laboratories, which ultimately drive sensible federal debates on reform. As occurred with welfare reform in the eighties and nineties, robust experimentation at the state level allowed federal officials to draw important lessons from the successes and failures of a number of states as they sought a thoughtful national welfare reform bill.

Regarding health care reform in Massachusetts, Pioneer has not yet taken a position on the reform act. We seek first to understand and measure its performance empirically.



[Pioneer Institute](#) is an independent, non-partisan, privately funded research organization that seeks to change the intellectual climate in the Commonwealth by supporting scholarship that tests marked solutions against the conventional wisdom of more governmental involvement in Massachusetts public policy issues.