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**Notes from editor (not for publication):**



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 Goldman won't seek re-election

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2 After three terms, the state representative for Bellows  
3 Falls and Rockingham will leave Montpelier — and Vermont

####END SUBHED####

4 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

5 Rep. Leslie Goldman, D-Windham-3, is leaving the  
6 Legislature when her third term ends this year. She is also leaving  
7 the district she has served, Bellows Falls and Rockingham.

8 "I'm leaving for a couple of good reasons," Goldman  
9 said. "One, I'm going to be 73, and I think it's time for young  
10 people to step up. Then, I have grandchildren in California. I'm

11 wanting to spend time there. So I'm going to be moving to San  
12 Francisco, California."

13 Goldman will be sorely missed, said her colleague  
14 Michelle Bos-Lun, D-Windham-3, who has shared the two-seat  
15 district for four years and called her "my district mate, my  
16 housemate, my carpool buddy, and my friend."

17 A member of the Health Committee, Goldman "has  
18 helped get important legislation regarding prescription drugs,  
19 birthing centers, and policies to update practices for school  
20 nurses," Bos-Lun said.

21 "This past biennium, she also served on the Democratic  
22 leadership team helping lead a range of initiatives, including  
23 mentoring the newest legislators," she added.

24 "I envy the time she will have with her new grand-baby,  
25 but I am personally and professionally sorry to lose her as a  
26 House colleague," Bos-Lun said.

## 27 **Focused on health care**

28 Goldman, a retired family nurse practitioner, has spent  
29 all her time in the Legislature serving on the House Committee  
30 on Health Care.

31 "Health care is hard," Goldman said. "I have been part of  
32 the health care committee at a time when our health care system  
33 was being exploded — or imploded. I'm not sure what the right  
34 word is."

35 She cited the report by the Oliver Wyman Group, an  
36 independent consultanting firm hired by the Green Mountain  
37 Care Board, in 2024, which concluded that, given Vermont's  
38 demographic projections and the finances of its hospitals, the  
39 state would be facing "dire" consequences.

40 "I was very much in favor of funding that report because  
41 it was found that the hospitals were so vulnerable," Goldman  
42 said, noting that Springfield Hospital's bankruptcy in 2019 "really  
43 woke up a lot of people to the financial vulnerabilities of our  
44 hospitals."

45           The Wyman report noted that nine out of the 14 hospitals  
46 in the state were projecting operating losses that year. “I think  
47 that got a lot of people’s attention, and there’s been a lot of work  
48 done as a result, trying to stabilize things,” Goldman said.

49           The controversial report painted a drastic and scary  
50 picture of the state’s health care system. It suggested that most  
51 hospitals would face operating losses by 2028, and  
52 recommended consolidation for struggling, smaller hospitals.

53           One rural hospital that is not in trouble is Grace Cottage  
54 Hospital in Townshend, Goldman pointed out.

55           “Grace Cottage has done incredible work in finding a  
56 really important niche — primary care, rehab, physical therapy,  
57 that kind of stuff,” Goldman said. “So I think there’s definitely  
58 roles for these facilities. It’s just a question of where they land.”

59           There were some wins, Goldman said.

60           “I think the best work that we did on the committee —  
61 and I just feel like it was a very collaborative process — was  
62 when Blue Cross Blue Shield almost went bankrupt,” Goldman  
63 said, noting that the process of resolving the crisis “was a lot of  
64 behind the scenes work that I wasn’t necessarily part of, except as  
65 a peer leader.”

66           She said the insurer was rescued “not by legislation, but  
67 by the work of our committee in negotiating agreements between  
68 the Green Mountain Care Board, the University of Vermont, and  
69 Blue Cross Blue Shield.”

70           “We worked out something that allowed Blue Cross to  
71 survive. So I’m being proud of that, because that’s a big  
72 achievement,” Goldman said.

73           One reason the health care system is in trouble is cost.

74           “Prices were too high, particularly at UVM,” Goldman  
75 said. “So the work of the Green Mountain Care Board, along with  
76 leadership in the House and the health care committee, worked  
77 to reduce prices. That was a good thing. It took about \$200  
78 million out of the system, which was really important.”

79 Then a study found that Vermont had the highest  
80 outpatient drug pricing in the country.

81 “That was for something like infusion rates for people  
82 with cancer and auto immune disease, rural people who were  
83 getting infusions in the country,” Goldman said. “So when that  
84 was discovered, the Green Mountain Care Board and its chair  
85 really got involved.”

86 In 2025, as a response, the Legislature passed a bill to  
87 cap the prices of hospital-administered outpatient drugs at 120%  
88 of their average sales price, aiming to make them the lowest in  
89 the country. Gov. Phil Scott signed the bill into law.

## 90 **Hard to say goodbye**

91 Goldman said she loves being in the Legislature.

92 “It’s very interesting,” Goldman said. “It’s important  
93 work.”

94 For her, the hard part of the job is twofold.

95 “One is personal, which is living far away and having to  
96 be away part of the year. Being away part of the week is very  
97 stressful,” Goldman said.

98 “The other thing, because I was in health care, we only  
99 get to nibble around the edges sometimes. We have federal and  
100 state actors. So we don’t have as much control as we as we  
101 would like,” she said.

102 Goldman said that as a new representative, she went to  
103 Montpelier “thinking that I could have more impact than I found  
104 that I could because of the basic structure.”

105 Still, she said, serving in the Legislature has been “an  
106 honor and a privilege.”

107 She especially enjoys working with the people in her  
108 district: meeting with them, and doing some problem-solving for  
109 them.

110 “That’s one of the things that I love,” Goldman said. “I  
111 really like interacting with constituents.”

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