



Legislation Text

File #: Res 32074, **Version:** 1

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION supporting the Whole Washington State Universal Healthcare Initiative.

WHEREAS, Article 25 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights sets forth that “Everyone

has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control establishes a fundamental right to healthcare”; and

WHEREAS, in Washington State, 430,000 have no health coverage and even more residents are underinsured, and lives would be saved by ensuring universal access to healthcare; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the negative ramifications of tying healthcare to employment; and

WHEREAS, the Whole Washington Health Trust bill, sponsored by seven Washington State

Senators, guaranteeing a non-profit, universal healthcare system for all Washingtonians, with a funding mechanism devised by a noted economist, reviewed by the Department of Revenue and the Employment Securities Department, demonstrates that Washington State residents will save billions of dollars annually when universal healthcare is implemented; and

WHEREAS, the passage of I-1471 in Washington State will support the state and national

efforts to establish Medicare for All: in December, 2021 the Washington State Universal Health Care Commission was established to further study implementation in this state and in May of 2022 15 U.S.

Senators introduced a Medicare for All Act, endorsed by "more than 60 major organizations" across the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, the January 15, 2021 Universal Health Care Work Group's report to the

Washington State Legislature included "Option A," "which found that a state-governed and administered program for all state residents" in Washington State would save an "Estimated implementation year savings [of]: \$2.5 billion [and an] Estimated annual steady state savings [of]: \$5.6 billion/year" in total public and private health care spending; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the U.S. spent twice as much on health care (17.1 percent of GDP) as

comparable Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development countries (OECD) (8.8 percent of GDP), all of whom have universal health care. In terms of dollars spent, in 2017, the average per capita health care spending of OECD countries [with universal health care] is \$3,558, while in the U.S. it is \$10,207 - nearly three times as costly; and

WHEREAS, according to the Commonwealth Health Fund, in the U.S., infant mortality is

higher, and the life span is shorter than among all comparable economies that provide universal health care; and

WHEREAS, "Black women face three times the maternal mortality risk as white women" in the

U.S. With an overall 23.8 deaths per 100,000 live births for all women, the U.S. statistic is nearly three times higher than France, the second highest among industrialized nations; and

WHEREAS, a Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of federal data "estimated that collective

medical debt [in the U.S.] totaled at least \$195 billion in 2019, larger than the economy of Greece.”; and

WHEREAS, from 2012 to 2016, prices for medical care surged 16 percent, almost four times the rate of overall inflation, a report by the nonprofit Health Care Cost Institute found; and

WHEREAS, the Urban Institute shows that nationwide, according to the poll, Black adults are 50 percent more

likely and Hispanic adults 35 percent more likely than whites to owe money for care. Women are more likely than men to be in [medical] debt; and

WHEREAS, people of color, people with disabilities, LGBTQI people, women, and low-income people are the most likely to lack affordable, comprehensive healthcare; and

WHEREAS, "In 2021, the Washington State Nurses Association (WSNA) joined health care unions SEIU 1199NW and UFCW 21, which represent more than 71,000 healthcare workers in the state, to form WA Safe + Healthy. This coalition called on Washington State legislators to pass safe staffing standards for the health and safety of workers and patients." The legislature failed to pass this bill; and

WHEREAS, in the Washington State 2021-22 Legislative session the "Keep Our Care Act" was introduced and supported by the ACLU, unions, and patient rights' advocates. "The bill included: A prohibition on health entity consolidations that diminish access to affordable quality care. The Keep Our Care Act would ensure health entity mergers, acquisitions, and contracting affiliations improve rather than harm access to affordable quality care within a community." This Washington State Legislature failed to pass these bills; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE THAT:

Section 1. The Seattle City Council endorses the people's efforts to pass Improved Medicare for All through Whole Washington's state-wide initiative I-1471; United States Senate Bill 4204 ("S. 4204"), "A bill to establish a Medicare-for-all national health insurance program"; and United States House Bill 1976 ("H.R. 1976"), "A bill to establish an improved Medicare for All national health insurance program."

Section 2. The Seattle City Council urges the Universal Health Care Commission to adopt "Option A" from the Universal Health Care Work Groups' report to the Legislature in January of 2021; and for Washington State lawmakers to pass a Medicare-for-All trust and statewide insurance program until such time that a national Medicare-for-All health insurance program is enacted.

Section 3. The Seattle City Council urges federal elected officials to pass Medicare-for-All national

legislation. The Seattle City Council urges Democrats in the U.S. Congress to use their full power, to vote for such legislation and their resources to build collegial grassroots action to pass it.

Section 4. The Seattle City Council requests that the Office of Intergovernmental Relations convey this resolution to the Washington State legislators; the Governor of Washington; the Washington State Universal Healthcare Commission; the Washington State Department of Health, Health Equity Division; and Washington State federal Congressional delegation.

Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2022, and signed by
me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2022.

President _____ of the City Council

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2022.

Elizabeth M. Adkisson, Interim City Clerk

(Seal)