



Legislation Text

File #: Res 31774, Version: 2

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION expressing the Seattle City Council’s support for a single-payer healthcare system (“Medicare for All”), supporting United States Senate Bill 1804, and requesting the support of Washington’s U.S. Senators.

WHEREAS, in the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25 designates healthcare to be a human right, stating: “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

WHEREAS, a public discussion about healthcare began in early 2017 as President Donald Trump and congressional Republicans attempted to repeal the Affordable Care Act, which the Congressional Budget Office estimated would have resulted in 22 million additional people losing healthcare coverage; and

WHEREAS, despite improvements made by the Affordable Care Act, 28.1 million people in the United States remained uninsured, and many more underinsured, in the first three months of 2017, according to an August 2017 survey published by the Centers for Disease Control’s National Center for Health Statistics; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner reported in February 2016 that 6.7 percent of people in King County are uninsured; and

WHEREAS, May 2017 studies published in *The Lancet* show that the for-profit healthcare and health insurance system in the United States costs \$9,237 per capita, more than in any other country in the world; and

WHEREAS, a “Medicare for All” healthcare system can provide healthcare to all Americans without the waste of for-profit insurance companies; and

WHEREAS, on September 13, 2017, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders introduced United States Senate Bill 1804 (“S. 1804”), titled “A bill to establish a Medicare-for-all health insurance program,” with the cosponsorship of 16 other Senators; and

WHEREAS, Senator Sanders previously introduced similar Senate bills in 2011 and 2013 with no cosponsors; and

WHEREAS, United States House Bill 676, the “Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act,” currently has 119 cosponsors (including both House members from Seattle’s congressional districts, Representatives Pramila Jayapal and Adam Smith), which is more cosponsors than any similar bill has received in previous years; and

WHEREAS, neither of Washington State’s United States Senators, Senators Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray, has yet cosponsored S. 1804 to support Medicare for All; and

WHEREAS, the future of healthcare in the United States in general, and Medicare for All in particular, is being hotly debated in political circles, in the media, and by the general public; and

WHEREAS, if the effort to push for Medicare for All at the U.S. federal level runs into obstacles, activists will need to build movements, possibly to first establish it at the state level, similar to how movements in the province of Saskatchewan led to Canada’s single-payer healthcare system; and

WHEREAS, it is incumbent on the Seattle City Council to speak out in this debate in defense of Seattleites who are uninsured, underinsured, or burdened by medical bills; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

Section 1. The Seattle City Council declares that healthcare is a human right. The Seattle City Council supports the public single-payer health insurance program commonly referred to as “Medicare for All.”

Section 2. The Seattle City Council supports United States Senate Bill 1804 (“S. 1804”), “A bill to establish a Medicare-for-all health insurance program,” and United States House Bill 676, the “Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act.” The Seattle City Council requests that the Seattle Office of Intergovernmental

Relations convey this support to the Seattle Congressional Delegation.

Section 3. The Seattle City Council requests that state lawmakers in Olympia investigate forming a statewide single-payer health insurance program if federal lawmakers fail to do so.

Section 4. The Seattle City Council urges Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell and the entire Seattle Congressional Delegation to cosponsor S.1804 and to support other future legislative efforts to improve access for health care for all.

Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2017, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2017.

President _____ of the City Council

The Mayor concurred the _____ day of _____, 2017.

_____, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2017.

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)