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Resolution Number: 31111

A RESOLUTION relating to support for universal access to quality health care.

Date introduced/referred: January 12, 2009
Status: In Committee

Committee: Culture, Civil Rights, Health and Personnel
Sponsor: LICATA

Index Terms: STATING-POLICY, HEALTH-CARE, PUBLIC-HEALTH, HEALTH-CARE-DELIVERY

Text

A RESOLUTION relating to support for universal access to quality health care.

WHEREAS, the Seattle City Council recognizes that it is increasingly difficult for many Seattle residents to obtain quality health care and supports the concerted efforts of local jurisdictions to encourage the United States Congress and other decision makers to design and fund a rational health care system; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 160,000 or 15.6% of King County residents less than 65 years of age do not have health insurance; and

WHEREAS, the number of uninsured children in Washington State has reached the highest level in more than a decade and 3% of children in King County are uninsured; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 50% of Washington State residents do not have dental insurance or rely on Medicaid for coverage; and

WHEREAS, Seattle's community health clinics provide treatment for individuals regardless of their ability to pay and approximately 60% of their new patients are uninsured costing King County \$139,821,202 in 2006; and

WHEREAS, the costs of providing health and dental care continue to increase and

hospitals and health-care professionals provided \$86 million last year in charity care for those unable to pay; and

WHEREAS, the lack of a national system for funding and providing universal access to quality health care has led to a rapid increase in health care costs in the United States, which now has the world's highest per-capita health-care costs; and

WHEREAS, rising health-care costs have affected employers' ability to provide health-care benefits for their workers and have sharply increased the costs of doing business; and

WHEREAS, the costs to the City of Seattle of providing health-care benefits to its employees have risen while City revenue has not kept pace; and

WHEREAS, only a rational system for financing and delivering quality health care will help ensure that all Americans have access to these necessary services at a cost that is reasonable to them and to their employers, including the City of Seattle; and

WHEREAS, the United States lags behind many other developed nations in terms of many indicators of its citizens' health, including life- expectancy and infant mortality; and

WHEREAS, at least eighteen states have introduced legislation supporting universal health care including Washington, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, New York and Vermont; and

WHEREAS, national legislation in the form of HR 676 is supported by the National Congress of Mayors and 27 municipal and 18 county governments; NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE MAYOR CONCURRING THAT:

SECTION 1. Every person in the United States should have the right to health care of equal high quality. The U.S. Congress should enact legislation to establish and implement this right and we request that Washington State's Representatives and Senators in the U. S. Congress support adoption of HR 676 providing universal access to quality health care.

Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2009, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2009.

President _____ of the City Council

City Clerk

(Seal)

LH:LH

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