



Text File

Introduced: 11/20/2017

Bill No: 2017-2151, **Version:** 1

Committee: City Council

Status: Adopted

WHEREAS, reproductive health is a critical component of women's overall health, and women need access to safe, affordable, and comprehensive reproductive health care throughout their lives, including screening for cancer and sexually transmitted infections, contraceptive services, abortion care, prenatal care, and labor and delivery services; and

WHEREAS, woman's freedom to make reproductive decisions is vital to her safety, well-being, economic opportunity, and ability to participate equally in society; and

WHEREAS, in 1973, the United States Supreme Court ruled that a woman's ability to make her own personal medical decisions about when or whether to have children is a protected Constitutional right, but severe restrictions in the Hyde Amendment of 1976 have impeded the ability of low-income women enrolled in the Medicaid health insurance program from accessing this medical procedure; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania law currently imposes limitations on insurance coverage of abortion in the state Medicaid program; and

WHEREAS, many women in Pittsburgh, including state and federal employees, Peace Corps members, beneficiaries of Indian Health Services and military insurance programs, obtain insurance coverage through other public insurance programs that include restrictions on coverage for abortion; and

WHEREAS, laws, such as these, that restrict insurance coverage of abortion create unjust obstacles to quality healthcare and the harm falls hardest on low-income women, women of color, immigrant women, transgender and gender non-conforming people, women with disabilities, and young women; and

WHEREAS, health insurance, whether private or government funded, should cover the full range of a woman's options when she is facing an unintended pregnancy, so that she is able to, without interference, make the decision she deems best for her and her family; and

WHEREAS, The Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance (EACH Woman) Act, reintroduced in the United States House of Representatives in January 2017, would ensure abortion coverage for every woman, regardless of her income level or type of insurance and prohibit interference with decisions of private health insurance companies to offer coverage for abortion care; and

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania General Assembly could remedy these gaps for Pennsylvanians by providing abortion coverage in public insurance programs in Pennsylvania and lifting the ban on such coverage in private insurance plans sold through the Pennsylvania Health Insurance Exchange; and

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the council of the City of Pittsburgh calls on both Congress to reinstate abortion service coverage for women enrolled in public insurance programs by enacting the Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance (EACH Woman) Act and the Pennsylvania General Assembly to provide abortion coverage in public insurance programs in Pennsylvania and lift the ban on such coverage in private insurance plans sold through the Pennsylvania Health Insurance Exchange; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Council calls upon President Trump and Governor Wolf to actively support these and all other measures to insure and protect the rights of women everywhere to have unhindered access to safe and comprehensive health care.