



Text File

Introduced: 6/19/2018

Bill No: 2018-0613, **Version:** 1

Committee: City Council

Status: Adopted

WHEREAS, each and every person in the City of Pittsburgh - as well as in the United States - is deserving of robust, high-quality healthcare that provides excellent, patient-oriented outcomes; and

WHEREAS, in a 2017 study, the American College of Physicians affirmed the clear fact that health insurance reduces mortality and noted that the probability of dying among individuals with health insurance relative to those without health insurance is 0.71 to 0.97, with an estimated 36,000 Americans dying prematurely on a yearly basis because they do not have health insurance; and

WHEREAS, despite spending \$3.3 trillion annually on healthcare, which is nearly twice as much as any other high-income country, the U.S. nonetheless receives poor marks on international scoring matrices; and

WHEREAS, drawing on survey data it has collected since 1998 and supplementing that evidence with comparative data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the World Health Organization, and the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, The Commonwealth Fund found that when evaluating access, healthcare outcomes, and equity, the U.S. ranks last in an 11-country comparison. Overall, the U.S. ranks last in overall healthcare system performance; and

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2016-2025 national health expenditure forecast, national health spending is projected to grow at a yearly average pace of 5.6 percent and at a pace of 4.7 per year per capita; and

WHEREAS, although improvements were made through the Affordable Care Act, many Americans still do not have their vital need for health insurance met in any capacity whatsoever, as more than 27 million Americans lack health insurance, with more than 700,000 of those without coverage residing in Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, more than half of all workers with employer-based plans have deductibles of \$1,000 or more, and more than one-third of all adults in the country report facing difficulty paying premiums and deductibles, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This employer-based system also poses hazards to vulnerable workers, the underemployed, and the unemployed, who, on average, have worse physical and mental health, yet are less likely to receive the medical care of which they are in need; and

WHEREAS, on the federal level, in September 2017, Senate Bill No. 1804 (S.1804), the Medicare for All Act, was introduced in the U.S. Senate. The scope of this bill is to establish a universal single-payer healthcare program that would guarantee care and ensure quality outcomes to everyone in the country. The establishment of such a system would reduce the number of uninsured Americans to zero and lead to most care becoming free at the point of service, delivered under a single and universal program. U.S. House of Representatives Bill No. 676 (HR 676) also seeks the creation and operation of a single-payer system; and

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WHEREAS, on the state level, Pennsylvania House Bill No. 1688 (HB 1688) and Pennsylvania Senate Bill No. 1014 (SB 1014), which constitute the Pennsylvania Healthcare for All Plan, seek to establish a public health system for healthcare financing that would deliver healthcare coverage to all Pennsylvania residents, thereby providing for more comprehensive access to necessary and often life-saving care; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby encourage any and all lawmakers at the various levels of government throughout the country to take swift and expedient action to support legislation or other efforts that will lead to the establishment of a national single-payer healthcare system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh affirms its recognition of healthcare as a fundamental human right.