



Legislation Text

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL

Introduced by: Councilmember Holton

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL concerning
In Support of Federal Legislation - Comprehensive Health Reform

FOR the purpose of joining the National Association of Counties (NACo) in urging the Honorable Members of the 111th Congress of the United States to enact comprehensive health reform legislation before the close of the 1st session; and providing for a special effective date.

The Baltimore City Council supports passage of comprehensive federal health reform legislation and, as a member organization, endorses NACo's resolution to the 111th Congress as follows:

Whereas, families in Baltimore City are experiencing this crisis right now, confronting the high cost of health care that threatens their financial stability, leaves them exposed to higher premiums and deductibles, and puts them at risk for a possible loss of health insurance; and

Whereas, employer-sponsored health insurance premiums have nearly doubled in recent years making it increasingly difficult for employers, including county governments, to provide health insurance coverage for their employees and retirees; and

Whereas, millions of Americans do not have health coverage, or have inadequate coverage and as our economic challenges multiply, the problem of health care access grows, further straining counties' capacity to provide care for the uninsured, under-insured and medically indigent; and

Whereas, there are approximately 111,751 uninsured in Baltimore. Many are hard working parents who make too much for Medicaid, \$25,600 for a family of four, and are not offered or can't afford health coverage through their employer. Although Baltimore has a network of health safety net providers too often these uninsured Baltimoreans go without even the most basic health care including life saving preventative care; and

Whereas, as a result, treatable medical conditions go unnoticed until there is a crisis. Reforming the health care system will give tens of thousands of Baltimoreans access to life saving health services and treatment.

Whereas, county officials are elected to protect the health and welfare of their constituents; and

Whereas, the NACo Health System Reform Working Group, chaired by NACo President Valerie Brown held 3 regional hearings to explore the health crisis and to hear what county officials believe should be done about it and has summarized the findings in Restoring the Partnership for American Health: Counties in a 21st Century Health System which was approved and adopted by resolution of the NACo Health Steering Committee, Board of Directors, and Membership in July, 2009.

SECTION 1. BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the City Council of Baltimore endorses NACo's health reform principles, as summarized in Restoring the Partnership for American Health": Counties in a 21st Century Health System; namely, that reform legislation should:

1. Restore the partnership between local and federal governments;
2. Provide access to affordable, quality health care to all;
3. Invest in public health, including health promotion and disease and injury prevention;
4. Stabilize and strengthen the local health care safety net system, especially Medicaid and disproportional share hospital (DSH) payments;
5. Invest in the development of the health professional and paraprofessional workforce;
6. Ensure that local health agencies have the resources to meaningfully use health information technology;
7. Enable elderly and disabled persons to receive the services they need in the least restrictive environment; and
8. Reform the delivery and financing of health services in the jail system.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of NACo and the Baltimore City Council strongly urges the 111th Congress of the United States to enact comprehensive health reform legislation without delay before the close of the 1st session.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Honorable Maryland Members of the 111th Congress of the United States, the Governor of the State of Maryland, the Baltimore City Senate and House Delegations to the 427th Session of the Maryland General Assembly, the Mayor of Baltimore City, the Baltimore City Health Commissioner, the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of State Relations, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the General Assembly.

SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this Resolution takes effect on the date it is enacted.
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