

RENSSELAER COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Introduced by Legislator(s) Brearton, McHugh, Fasoldt

Sent To: Health

Committee

Date July 10, 2007

Resolution No. P/9

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO COMPREHENSIVE, QUALITY COVERAGE FOR HEALTH CARE

WHEREAS, Every person in Rensselaer County and the United States deserves access to affordable quality health care; and

WHEREAS, Americans have identified the lack of affordable, universal healthcare as their number one domestic problem; and

WHEREAS, Costs of providing health care to employees is becoming a burden to employers, as well as municipalities and taxpayers. Rensselaer County's local share of Medicaid has increased over \$10 million since 2001, and the County's share of health insurance has risen from \$6 million in 2001 to an anticipated \$11.8 million in 2007, demonstrating the need to undertake a major overhaul and reform of the health insurance system; and

WHEREAS, Illness and medical bills contribute to 50 percent of all U.S. bankruptcies, affecting more than 2 million Americans annually; and

WHEREAS, Americans already pay the world's highest taxes for health care, almost twice the amount of industrialized nations. The U.S. could recoup 350 billion spent annually with an efficient universal coverage program; and

WHEREAS, A National Health Insurance Program would free doctors and hospitals from the consistent burdens and expenses of paper work created by having to deal with multiple insurers with different rules often designed to avoid payment; and

WHEREAS, During the transition to a national plan, the savings on administration and profits would fully offset the costs of expanded and improved coverage; and

WHEREAS, As many as one in three New Yorkers under the age of 65 are uninsured at some point in any one year period; and

WHEREAS, New York has such high local property taxes because counties and NYC are required to pay up to 25 percent of the cost of the Medicaid program; and

WHEREAS, New York should adopt a single payer health care system because New York and the U.S. are already paying for universal health care with the amount of funds spent on Medicaid and Medicare alone. The total is more than any other country spends to provide quality health care for all; and

(over)

WHEREAS, Single payer merely means that one entity pays all bills. One entity being a government run organization that would collect all health care fees, and pay out all health care costs; and

WHEREAS, Single payers preserve the right of doctors and patients to determine what medical care is provided; and

WHEREAS, All New Yorkers would receive comprehensive medical benefits under single payer, regardless of their employment status or ability to pay; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. National Health Insurance Act, co-sponsored by Congressman Michael McNulty, would assure universal coverage of all medically necessary services, contain costs by slashing bureaucracy, protect the doctor patient relationship, assure patients a completely free choice of doctors, and allow physicians a free choice of practice settings; now, therefore, be it

WHEREAS, The Rensselaer County Legislature believes that both controlling health care costs and ensuring health care for all residents is of vital importance; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body does hereby support the adoption of Bill No. H.R. 676, of a single payer system in order to induce universal access to comprehensive, quality coverage for health care; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of this Legislative Body is hereby directed to transmit certified copies of this resolution to Congressman Michael McNulty, Congresswoman Kirsten Gillibrand, Senator Charles E. Schumer and Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Resolution ADOPTED by the following vote:

Ayes:

Nays:

Abstain:

July 10, 2007