

By: Zerwas

H.C.R. No. 60

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, In 1989, the State of Texas authorized the creation
2 of public entity benefit pools to allow municipalities and counties
3 to combine resources to provide affordable employee benefits; and

4 WHEREAS, Two major health care benefit pools have been
5 created in Texas to provide affordable health care to tens of
6 thousands of Texas families who could not otherwise obtain such
7 coverage; currently, the TML Intergovernmental Employee Benefits
8 Pool provides benefit coverage to the employees and families of
9 more than 800 member political subdivision entities, the majority
10 of which have fewer than 50 employees; the Texas Association of
11 Counties Health and Employee Benefits Pool, the largest benefits
12 pool for county employees in the nation, provides coverage for
13 employees of most Texas counties; and

14 WHEREAS, These major pools in Texas are providing
15 high-quality health care coverage at a cost that is considerably
16 less than the national average, and their scope exceeds that of the
17 essential health benefits coverage mandated by the new federal
18 health care law; and

19 WHEREAS, Unfortunately, the new federal law inadvertently
20 created a strong incentive for political subdivisions to consider
21 dropping coverage for their employees; the law provides that no
22 employer with fewer than 50 employees will face any penalties for
23 dropping health care coverage altogether, and beginning in 2014,
24 new federally authorized health care exchanges will offer health

1 care coverage with generous cost-sharing subsidies and premium tax
2 credits for individuals and families with incomes of up to 400
3 percent of the federal poverty level; and

4 WHEREAS, If the Texas health benefits pools were made
5 eligible to receive cost-sharing and premium tax credit assistance
6 under the same formula as federal exchange plans, the cost to the
7 federal government would be lower due to the lower cost of the
8 benefits provided by the Texas health care pools; for this same
9 reason, political subdivision employees would also save money on
10 health care coverage; now, therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, That the 83rd Legislature of the State of Texas
12 hereby respectfully urge the United States Congress to modify the
13 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to allow cost-sharing
14 payments and premium tax credits to be made available to the Texas
15 political subdivision health care benefit pools on the same basis
16 and under the same formula as such payments and credits will be made
17 available to health plans participating in the new federal
18 exchange; and, be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
20 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to
21 the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of
22 Representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the
23 members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that
24 this resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record
25 as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.