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By:  Reynolds H.C.R. No. 80

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The United States remains the only developed country without universal health care, and while it spends more on health care than other advanced nations, it ranks lowest in life expectancy and performs poorly on a variety of health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, By 2017, the U.S. was spending about $3.24 trillion annually on personal health care, representing 17.2 percent of Gross Domestic Product, despite the fact that 9 percent of U.S. residents have no health insurance and 26 percent are underinsured and cannot afford the prohibitively high costs of the care they need; on average, other high-income countries spend about 40 percent less per person than the U.S. while achieving better health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. has the world's most bureaucratic health care system; more than 31 percent of every health care dollar is spent on paperwork, overhead, CEO salaries, corporate profits, and the like, and because we have more than 1,500 different insurance plans, our insurance system is extremely complex, fragmented, dysfunctional, and expensive; hospitals and other health care providers waste countless hours dealing with insurance claims departments, a chore that costs the average physician almost $100,000 per year, according to a recent study; meanwhile, business owners struggle to afford health insurance for their employees, workers pay higher premiums, co-pays, and deductibles, and 80 million people lack adequate health insurance, leaving some seriously ill patients and their families to beg for help on social media fund-raising platforms; and

WHEREAS, Single-payer health care, often referred to in the U.S. as Medicare for All, is designed to significantly improve health care outcomes while establishing effective cost controls throughout the health care system; all residents would receive quality health care as a basic right, from the providers of their choice, through an insurance system that covers everyone in a manner comparable to the existing Medicare program for residents 65 years and older; coverage would include all medically necessary services, including doctor visits, hospitalization, mental health, long-term care, prescription drugs, dental, vision, and more, without the need for co-pays or deductibles; and

WHEREAS, Nearly 30 independent economic analyses have found that a single-payer system would lower costs; in 2018, a comprehensive report by the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts Amherst calculated that Medicare for All would reduce total health care spending in the U.S. by nearly 19 percent, relative to the existing system; the most significant cost savings would occur in the areas of administration and pharmaceutical pricing, as well as through the establishment of uniform Medicare rates for hospitals, physicians, and clinics; additional savings, at least in the initial years, would accrue by reining in the high levels of waste and fraud that currently prevail in service provision; and

WHEREAS, Absent systemic change, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services projects that U.S. health consumption expenditures will soar to 18.8 percent of GDP by 2026; the implementation of Medicare for All is projected to reduce the percentage from 17.2 to 15.8 percent, even after accounting for the rising cost pressures due to an aging population; moreover, broader macroeconomic benefits would include improved health outcomes that raise productivity, promote greater income equality, and increase job creation, especially by lowering operating costs for small and medium-sized businesses; and

WHEREAS, Our current health care system is failing millions of Americans, but Medicare for All can deliver vastly less expensive care to everyone in a far more fair and efficient manner; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the 86th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby respectfully urge the United States Congress to enact legislation establishing a single-payer health care system; and, be it further

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