



Legislation Text

File #: 23-0251, Version: 1

Dept/ Agency: Office of the Mayor

Action: () Ratifying (X) Authorizing () Amending

Type of Service: Declaration by the Mayor of the City of Newark, Ras J. Baraka and the Municipal Council

Purpose: Support of the Medicare for All Act of 2021 (H.R. 1976)

Additional Information:

The Municipal Council and Mayor of the City of Newark supports and urges Congress to enact emergency legislation to provide universal, comprehensive health coverage with zero cost-sharing for patients during this crisis and enthusiastically supports the Medicare for All Act of 2021 (H.R. 1976) and calls on our federal legislators to work toward its immediate enactment.

WHEREAS, every person in City of Newark deserves high quality health care and everyone's health is at risk when our neighbors cannot receive care; and

WHEREAS, the number of Americans without health insurance before the COVID-19 pandemic was near 30 million, still with more than 40 million Americans underinsured, despite important gains made since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act; and

WHEREAS, the current COVID-19 pandemic has led to record levels of unemployment, loss of employer-sponsored health insurance, a severely strained health care system, widespread illness, and taken a profound toll on our community's mental health, all of which is placing significant demands on our health care system with the impacts most severe on our Black and Brown neighbors; and

WHEREAS, many people delay seeking needed health care due to an inability to pay, leading to a sicker and poorer population in the long run; and

WHEREAS, such a population is significantly more likely to develop serious illness if exposed to COVID-19 and will subsequently face higher mortality rates from the disease; and

WHEREAS, without new strategies, the never-ending rising costs of health care further challenge our already strapped municipal budget and our small businesses that keep our communities thriving; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 related treatment could cost uninsured patients tens of thousands of dollars; and

WHEREAS, in order to equitably and effectively address the health care burden of the COVID-19 crisis, we must urge the United States Congress to expand health insurance coverage to provide comprehensive coverage to every resident of the United States without any cost sharing; and

WHEREAS, the Medicare for All Act of 2021 would provide national health insurance for every person in the United States for all necessary medical care including diagnostic (e.g., virus) testing; prescription drugs; hospital, surgical and outpatient services; primary and preventive care; emergency services; women’s reproductive care; dental and vision care; and long-term care; and

WHEREAS, the Medicare for All Act of 2021 would provide coverage without copays, deductibles or other out-of-pocket costs, and would slash bureaucracy, protect the doctor-patient relationship and assure patients a free choice of doctors; and

WHEREAS, recent polls show that a growing majority of Americans support Medicare-for-All; and

WHEREAS, the Medicare for All Act of 2021 will guarantee that all residents of City of Newark will be fully covered for health care without copays, deductibles or other out-of-pocket costs, and would save millions in taxpayer dollars now spent on premiums that provide often inadequate health insurance coverage for government employees; and

WHEREAS, the failure to provide affordable and appropriate preventative health care services places unnecessary and more costly demands upon City of Newark emergency health care services; and

WHEREAS, the quality of life for the residents of the City of Newark will vastly improve because everyone would be able to get preventative and ongoing care, when they need it to keep themselves and their neighbors healthy and avoid further burdening local resources; and

WHEREAS, the City of Newark urges Congress to enact emergency legislation to provide universal, comprehensive health coverage with zero cost-sharing for patients during this crisis and enthusiastically supports the Medicare for All Act of 2021 (H.R. 1976) and calls on our federal legislators to work toward its immediate enactment, assuring appropriate and efficient health care for all residents of the United States.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, NEW JERSEY, THAT:

1. The Municipal Council and the Mayor of the City of Newark, Ras J. Baraka supports and urges Congress to work toward the immediate enactment of the Medicare for All Act of 2021 (H.R. 1976) by assuring appropriate and efficient health care for all residents of the United States.
2. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the importance of making high-quality healthcare available to everyone; our existing system leaves out too many people of color and those with limited resources.
3. Millions who have no insurance or insurance with high out-of-pocket costs, face the possibility that a major illness would lead to financial ruin; medical illness and bills contribute to two-thirds of all bankruptcies.
4. Managed care and other market-based reforms have failed to contain health care costs, which threaten the international competitiveness of U.S. businesses.
5. The existence of thousands of public and private insurance providers and regulators has resulted in extraordinarily complex (and unsustainable) health care business procedures that consume almost one-third of our nation’s expenditures for health care.
6. Administrative waste stemming from our reliance on private insurers consumes one-third of private health

spending while the single-payer Medicare system has administration costs of less than 5 percent.

7. Rationing health care according to ability to pay has diminished the overall health of our citizens to the point that the United States ranks last among industrialized nations in health outcomes and as many as 30,000 people in the United States die each year due to inadequate health care.
8. Numerous academic studies have concluded that the administrative savings under a single-payer, Medicare for All system would be enough to cover the currently uninsured and improve coverage for all those who now have only partial coverage.
9. Entrusting care to profit-oriented firms diverts billions of dollars to outrageous incomes for CEOs and threatens the quality of care.
10. The failure to provide affordable and appropriate preventative health care services places unnecessary and more costly demands upon City of Newark emergency health care services.

STATEMENT

The Municipal Council and the Mayor of the City of Newark, Ras J. Baraka supports and urges Congress to enact emergency legislation to provide universal, comprehensive health coverage with zero cost-sharing for patients during this crisis and enthusiastically supports the Medicare for All Act of 2021 (H.R. 1976) and calls on our federal legislators to work toward its immediate enactment, assuring appropriate and efficient health care for all residents of the United States.