

1 **RESOLUTION NO.**

2
3 **WHEREAS**, Texas has the highest rates and number of uninsured and
4 underinsured people in the nation, with 1 in 5 Texans uninsured; and

5 **WHEREAS**, COVID-19 caused over 600,000 Texans to lose access to job-
6 based healthcare during the pandemic; and

7 **WHEREAS**, on April 1 2023, pandemic-era policies that allowed for
8 continuous eligibility expired; and

9 **WHEREAS**, it is estimated that 700,000 Texans could lose health insurance
10 coverage, increasing the uninsurance rate by at least 2 percentage points across the
11 state; and

12 **WHEREAS**, Texas suffers from some of the worst racial health disparities
13 in the nation, clearly demonstrated by both the maternal and neonatal mortality
14 rates amongst Black Texans and the unequal distribution of morbidity and
15 mortality during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

16 **WHEREAS**, the cost of health care often prevents people from getting
17 needed care and/or filling prescriptions; and

18 **WHEREAS**, during the current 88th Texas Legislative Session, State
19 Representative Julie Johnson and State Senators Nathan Johnson and Cesar Blanco
20 filed the Live Well Texas bills (House Bill 652 and Senate Bill 195), which would
21 drastically expand healthcare to low-income Texans; and

22 **WHEREAS**, patients should have access to qualified providers without the
23 limitations of In-Network and Out-of-Network structures; and

24 **WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has clearly demonstrated that access
25 to health care should not be tied to employment; and

26 **WHEREAS**, the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan established the
27 percentage of City residents with health care coverage as a Healthy Austin
28 Indicator and in 2021, 19.9% of Travis County residents ages 18-64 did not have
29 health insurance coverage; and

30 **WHEREAS**, the Strategic Direction 2023 Health and Environment
31 Strategies include providing and/or supporting initiatives that can connect those
32 seeking wellness and medical care with the appropriate providers and help them
33 navigate and overcome critical barriers to obtaining health and mental health
34 services; and

35 **WHEREAS**, Medicare has provided guaranteed health care for millions of
36 seniors for more than 50 years; and

37 **WHEREAS**, Medicare for All will guarantee that all residents in the City
38 of Austin and the State of Texas will be fully covered for health care without
39 copays, deductibles or other out-of-pocket costs, and would save millions in
40 taxpayer dollars; and

41 **WHEREAS**, Medicare for All legislation has been filed and supported by
42 members of the United States Congress in 2021 and 2022; and

43 **WHEREAS**, the quality of life for the residents of Austin will vastly
44 improve because they would be able to receive the regular health care they need;
45 and

