



Tompkins County Council of Governments

Governor Daniel D. Tompkins Building
Ithaca, NY 14850

Meeting: 05/28/15 03:00 PM
Department: Legislature Office
Category: Legislation or Funding - State and Federal
Functional Category: Health Related

ADOPTED

DOC ID: 5648

RESOLUTION NO. 004-2015

Reaffirming Support for a Single-Payer Approach to Controlling Health-Care Costs and Ensuring Everyone is Covered and Urging the New York State Assembly and Senate to Enact the New York Health Act A.5062 (Gottfried)/S.3525 (Perkins)

MOVED by Mr. Hartill, seconded by Ms. Weiser, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present.

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Council of Governments supports and a single-payer approach to health-care coverage for New York State, and

WHEREAS, a single-payer approach, as the name implies, only federalizes how health-care providers are paid, leaving the choice of doctors and hospitals completely up to each individual and the choice of treatment up to each patient and his/her doctor, and

WHEREAS, access to health care continues to be a major concern for all Americans and New York State residents [with over one million currently uninsured and a growing number underinsured], and

WHEREAS, health-care costs continue to rise at rates above inflation and, under current conditions, the share of state income spent on health care and the administration of the health care system will rise to 18 percent by 2024, much faster than incomes are rising, and

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Council of Governments continues to believe that controlling health-care costs and ensuring health care for all residents are both of paramount importance, and

WHEREAS, the simplest approach is to move directly from the current multiple-payer approach, with its high costs of administration, marketing, and profits for shareholders of the many insurance companies, to a single-payer system, where the government is the insurer of all, a system used in other industrialized democracies, and

WHEREAS, New York Health would generate savings by replacing the complicated, costly, and often chaotic claims procedure currently employed by thousands of public and private insurance providers, with a simple, one-stop single-payer system for all claims, and

WHEREAS, Senator Perkins and Assemblyman Gottfried have introduced the New York Health Act, A.5062 (Gottfried)/S.3525 (Perkins), which would establish a comprehensive universal health insurance program for all New Yorkers, with access to medical services and providers of their choice, without regard to age, income, health, or employment status and would impact both individual health outcomes and public health outcomes, and

WHEREAS, New York Health will replace the current multi-payer system of employer-based insurance, individually-acquired insurance, and federally sponsored programs (e.g. Medicare and Medicaid) with a single-billing system funded by progressively-graduated assessments collected by the State and based on ability to pay, and

WHEREAS, New York Health will be publically financed by two assessments based on ability to pay (a progressively graduated state payroll tax similar to the Medicare tax on payroll and self-employment income, and a surcharge on non-employment income (e.g. interest, dividends, capital gains), and

WHEREAS, New York Health will pool all health revenue sources (e.g. assessments, federally-matched public health programs, ACA subsidies, and other revenue sources) into a dedicated New York Health Trust Fund and pay Providers directly, and

WHEREAS, New York Health will reduce billing expenses, administrative waste, monopolistic pricing of drugs and medical devices, and fraud, overall health care spending would be reduced by 15 percent or \$45 billion per year by 2019, and

WHEREAS, New York Health will reduce healthcare costs for government, public schools districts, businesses, and individuals in New York State, eliminate the “local share” funding of Medicaid that has been such a financial burden for County property taxpayers, and eliminate out-of-pocket expenses, insurance premiums, insurance co-pays, and deductibles [98% of New Yorkers will pay less for their health care than they do today; and businesses, especially small businesses, will benefit from reduced costs], and

WHEREAS, the April 2015 *Economic Analysis of New York Health*, by Gerald Friedman, Professor and Chair of the Economics Department, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, reports savings from reduced health spending in the amount of \$71 billion [most savings are from eliminating private health insurance overhead and profits, reducing doctor and hospital billing and insurance-related expenses, eliminating uncompensated care from health providers, public hospitals and health centers, and decreasing drug and medical device costs with enhanced negotiating power], and

WHEREAS, the April 2015 *Economic Analysis of New York Health* reports a net savings of \$44.7 billion, after projected program improvements and expansion of \$25 billion for increased utilization due to universal coverage, expanded and more comprehensive health benefits, Medicaid and Medicare rate equity (increased provider reimbursement), unemployment insurance and job transition and retraining for lost insurance billing and claims jobs, and

WHEREAS, New York Health would expand the network of providers to ensure continuity of care, and include a more comprehensive health care benefits package that includes preventive care, primary care, specialist, hospital care, rehabilitation care, occupational therapy, physical therapy, mental health care, dental care, vision and hearing care, reproductive health care, prescription drugs, and medical supplies/devices [a requirement for the development of a long-term care financing and benefits plan is included in the proposed legislation], and

WHEREAS, New York Health would save enough in unnecessary costs to pay for the costs of universal health care coverage for all, extending coverage to all the uninsured and underinsured for basic necessary medical care, and would provide a more comprehensive benefits package at significantly less cost than the one offered through recent federal legislation, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Tompkins County Council of Governments strongly supports adoption of the New York Health Act, A.5062 (Gottfried)/S.3525 (Perkins),

RESOLVED, further, That the Tompkins County Council of Governments urges the New York State Legislature and the Governor to waste no more time tinkering with the present profit-based insurance system, escape the mindset that major reform is “politically infeasible” (a self-fulfilling prophecy!), and instead recognize the widespread support for a new public approach, understand there is no stronger measure New York could take to cut our property taxes than to pass this bill into law, and take the opportunity to accomplish this major and long-needed reform,

RESOLVED, further, That the TCCOG send copies to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Senators John Flanagan, Jeffrey Klein, Kemp Hannon, Andrea Stewart-Cousins, James Seward, Michael Nozzolio, and Tom O’Mara, and Assemblyman Carl Heastie and Richard Gottfried, and Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton.

RESOLVED, further, That the Tompkins County Council of Governments urges municipalities within Tompkins County to adopt a similar resolution and forward to the Governor and appropriate State representatives,

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

