

CITY OF HOLYOKE, MASS.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING AN ACT ESTABLISHING MEDICARE FOR ALL IN MASSACHUSETTS – Passed May 7, 2019

WHEREAS: access to affordable, quality health care is a human right and a fundamental component of a decent and just society; and

WHEREAS: the United States remains the only industrialized nation that does not provide universal health coverage to its citizens; and

WHEREAS: recent healthcare reforms still leave many citizens with costs beyond their means and care below their needs; and

WHEREAS: Massachusetts families face a high burden of health care costs relative to their income; and

WHEREAS: in particular, the money spent by Cities & Towns to cover their employees is a large cost to both the employer and the employees; and

WHEREAS: the City of Holyoke projects a cost of more than \$10,300,000 for employee and retiree health insurance for FY 2018, representing over 8% of the city's \$128 million budget, and projects those costs to rise up to 10% annually for the next three years, increasing the tax burden on local taxpayers ; and

WHEREAS: these funds could be better spent to improve the overall quality of life, and by employees to increase wages and salaries and other benefits; and

WHEREAS: corporate profit should have no place in keeping our communities healthy or caring for the sick; and

WHEREAS: the November 2018 ballot question supporting single payer healthcare garnered “yes” votes from 68% of Holyoke citizens who weighed in on the issue; and

WHEREAS: Medicare for All, or “single-payer” health care, is a system that would guarantee medical care, dental care, and eye care for all Massachusetts residents, regardless of income or employment, by simplifying the way we pay for health care, centralizing health care financing and cost control in a single public or quasi-public agency while keeping the delivery of care in private hands;

WHEREAS: Massachusetts has always been a leader and innovator in providing coverage for quality health care for its people.

WHEREAS: the Massachusetts Senate Bill SD2062 and House Bill HD2974 whose lead sponsors are Sen. Jamie Eldridge and Rep. Lindsey Sabadosa seek to establish a healthcare trust funded through a payroll tax that is less costly to Massachusetts residents than their current premiums, deductibles and copays, while a): covering all necessary preventive care and medical treatment; b) enabling people to see their current – or any—in -state provider for health care and providing for out-of-state emergency care; and c) ensuring health decisions are made between patients and their healthcare providers, not insurance adjusters;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Holyoke, Massachusetts, remains committed to providing high quality health care to city employees and retirees, and to making such health care available to all residents of Massachusetts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Holyoke endorses the House and Senate Bill, “Improved Medicare for All”

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Administrative Aide to the City Council shall cause a copy of this resolution to be sent to MA Governor Charles Baker; State Treasurer Deborah B. Goldberg; MA Senate President Karen E. Spilka; MA Speaker of the House Robert A. DeLeo; the original sponsors of Senate Bill SD2062 and House Bill HD2974, MA Senator Donald Humason and MA State Representative Aaron Vega; the co-chairs of the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing, U.S. Representative Jim McGovern; U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren; U.S. Senator Ed Markey; and Holyoke Mayor Alex B. Morse