



Wilbraham Democratic Town Committee



RESOLUTION SUPPORTING AN ACT ESTABLISHING MEDICARE FOR ALL IN MASSACHUSETTS

House Bill 1194 & Senate Bill 683
(2019-2020 Session)

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; and

WHEREAS: U.S. health outcomes are far below those of other industrialized countries, to the detriment of general well-being and national productivity; and

WHEREAS: recent health care reforms still leave Massachusetts families and individuals with costs beyond their means and care below their needs because of financial barriers to accessing care; and

WHEREAS: the COVID-19 pandemic has magnified with dreadful clarity the underlying weaknesses in our health care system, and its blow to the economy has cost Massachusetts workers their employer-based health coverage; and

WHEREAS: the COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted health disparities by region, income, race, ethnicity, sex, and age, particularly among the underinsured and uninsured; and

WHEREAS: in the pre-pandemic time, nearly 200,000 Massachusetts residents already lacked health insurance, including an estimated 300 in Wilbraham, while many more are unable to access care, even with insurance, due to high out-of-pocket costs in general and especially the current time of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS: small businesses and startups are disadvantaged by the high costs of providing private insurance to their employees under the current system, and such enterprises are critical to the economy of Wilbraham and the rest of the Greater Springfield Area; and

WHEREAS: the continued rise in costs of employment-based health insurance negatively affects our local economy by forcing small businesses and municipalities to reduce staffing, defer raises, and hire more workers on a part-time basis; and

WHEREAS: while health care has long been an item in labor negotiations, the health of our families and neighbors should never have to be bartered, and ensuring that all people are guaranteed access to affordable, high-quality health care would allow for labor negotiations to focus on providing a living wage and fair working conditions; and

WHEREAS: in particular, the money spent by Cities and Towns to cover their employees and retirees is a high cost to both the employer and the employees, as well as a cause of difficult collective bargaining; and

WHEREAS: the Town of Wilbraham projects a cost of more than \$1,834,200 for employee and retiree health insurance for FY 2021, representing 3.6% of the town budget; and

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



Wilbraham Democratic Town Committee



WHEREAS: insurance companies spend approximately 30% of healthcare dollars on bloated administrative costs and profits, compared with 3% to 4% overhead costs for U.S. Medicare; and

WHEREAS: corporate profit should have no place in keeping our communities healthy or caring for the sick; 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, eliminating co-pays, deductibles, or other out-of-pocket expenses and “networks” and “tiers” that limit provider choice, centralizing health care financing and cost control in a single independent public agency while keeping the delivery of care in private hands; and

WHEREAS: the Massachusetts Senate Bill 683 and House Bill 1184, whose lead sponsors are Sen. Jamie Eldridge and Rep. Lindsay Sabadosa, would establish the Massachusetts Health Care Trust, funded through a payroll tax that is less costly to Massachusetts residents than their current premiums, deductibles, and co-pays, 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 by patients and their health care providers, not insurance adjusters; and

WHEREAS: under this proposed legislation, the Town of Wilbraham in FY2021 would have saved an estimated \$1,834,200 on health coverage for the town current and retired employees and would have been relieved of the lion’s share of its other post-employment benefits (OPEB) liability; and

WHEREAS: the Massachusetts Democratic Party Platform calls for (1) eliminating racial, ethnic, regional, and sex-based health disparities, (2) ensuring high quality, accessible health care for all through a single-payer government-sponsored program, like Medicare, and (3) a single-payer system that delivers health care as a basic human right, fully-funds addiction prevention, and recovery; and

WHEREAS: the Democratic Committee of the Town of Wilbraham, Massachusetts, remains committed to advocating for high quality health care for the town employees and retirees, and supports making such health care available to all residents of Massachusetts.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, consistent with the State Democratic Party Platform, the Wilbraham Town Democratic Committee endorses Senate Bill 683 and House Bill 1194; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Democratic Committee of the Town of Wilbraham shall send a copy of this resolution to the Governor of the Commonwealth, the State Treasurer, the Senate President, the Speaker of the House, the State Democratic Committee, the original Sponsors of the legislation, the elected officials who represent the residents of Wilbraham in the Town Board of Selectmen, State Senate and House of Representatives, the co-chairs of the State Joint Committee on Health Care Financing, U.S. Representative Richard Neal, U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren, and U.S. Senator Ed Markey.



Wilbraham Democratic Town Committee



This resolution was passed without dissent by the Wilbraham Democratic Town Committee on September 21, 2020.

For information or questions contact:

Dr. Linda Dagradi, Chair
Wilbraham Democratic Town Committee
lmdagradi@gmail.com
413.374.0297

Wilbraham Democratic Town Committee

Rik Alvarez
Jonathon Ball
Gale Candaras
Jane Clark
Charles Clark
Linda Dagradi, Chair
Megan Dubord, Outreach Coordinator
Kandy Duffy
Bill Fogarty
Barbara Galanek
Christine Goonan
Ivan Gothner
Karen Grycel
Everett Handford
Thomas Hidalgo, Vice Chair
Maria Idali Torres
Chip Johnson
Mark Jones
Thomas Kenefick
Sean Kennedy
Ann Marie King
Sharon Kipetz
Terri Landeck, Secretary
Anna Levine
Robert Page
Marjorie Pessolano
Elizabeth Quigley
Jamison Rohan
Karen Rucks Walker
Richard Ryan
Carole Tardif
Robert Tourville
Ann Tousignant, Treasurer
Bruce Williams
Marjorie Williams