



City of Philadelphia

City Council
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Legislation Text

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Urging the United States Congress to preserve the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid Expansion as cutting back or repealing them would have disastrous effects on the health of Philadelphians and negatively impact the economy of entire Philadelphia region.

WHEREAS, On March 6, 2017, pursuant to Resolution 170059, Philadelphia City Council's Committee on Public Health and Human Services held a public hearing on the impact a repeal of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) would have on the residents of Philadelphia, particularly its low-income and elderly populations; and

WHEREAS, As the fifth largest city in the nation with the highest poverty rate of the country's largest 10 cities, it was appropriate and fiscally responsible for the Committee, as further authorized by the resolution, to assess the preparedness of the City in the event that a repeal leaves large portions of the city's population with inadequate healthcare insurance; and

WHEREAS, The hearing received written and in-person testimony from twenty-four witnesses representing local government, academia, hospitals, doctors, nurses, unions, lawyers, non-profit organizations and consumers who all emphasized the consequences that a repeal could have from their perspective; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Department of Health testified that people without health insurance have a mortality rate 40% higher than those with insurance; and

WHEREAS, The City's Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services testified that repeal could severely curtail or stop treatment for the 40,000 Philadelphians afflicted with substance use disorder; and

WHEREAS, The AARP submitted testimony on behalf of its 175,000 Philadelphia members stating that as a result of the ACA consumers between the ages of 55 and 64 have been able to obtain affordable health insurance before they become eligible for Medicare. The ACA has also reduced the cost of prescription drugs by lessening the coverage gap in Medicare Part D, which resulted in many older Americans paying huge out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs despite having a prescription drug insurance plan; and

WHEREAS, A repeal of the ACA will place more strain on the City's health centers and more care will be delivered in costly emergency room settings, where patients are likely to be less healthy and the cost of uncompensated care will be borne by all those who have health insurance and result in higher premium costs; and

WHEREAS, Medicare expansion is good for families, taxpayers and the economy. Medicaid expansion has made health coverage available to heretofore uninsured lower-income people, such as home health care aides, restaurant workers and retail employees. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that states with Medicaid expansion experienced 30% more job growth in the health care and social services sectors; and

WHEREAS, Block grants or caps on Medicaid spending could impact funds that go for services to children in

schools including children with special health care needs; and

WHEREAS, If the ACA is repealed, most adults in Philadelphia will lose the following insurance reforms/protections: no annual and life time limits, potential elimination of coverage for pre-existing conditions, young adults able to remain on their parents' coverage to age 26, no increased premiums for gender or medical condition and limits on increases for age, mental health parity requiring equal coverage for mental and physical health care, no-cost preventive health care including vaccinations, birth control pills, mammograms, colorectal screening; and

WHEREAS, The rush to pass repeal legislation fails to take into consideration how such repeal could seriously jeopardize the public health of one of the nation's largest cities and harm the region's economic stability and growth, now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby urges the United States Congress to preserve the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid Expansion as cutting back or repealing them would have disastrous effects on the health of Philadelphians and negatively impact the economy of entire Philadelphia region.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to all members of the Pennsylvania Congressional delegation as evidence of the grave concern of this legislative body.