

SJM 8006 - S AMD 474

By Senator Hasegawa

ADOPTED 01/17/2024

1 Beginning on page 1, line 10, strike all material through page 3,
2 line 28 and insert the following:

3 "WHEREAS, Universal health care is one of the most important
4 issues in the United States; and

5 WHEREAS, Article 25 of the universal declaration of human rights
6 ratified by the United Nations declares health care is a human right;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Of all the
9 forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and
10 inhuman"; and

11 WHEREAS, Our current health care system is in a downward spiral
12 with costs continuing to skyrocket, medical debt driving many into
13 bankruptcy or life-altering indebtedness, increasing child mortality
14 rates especially in communities with lower incomes, and creating
15 unnecessary suffering in entire families who struggle to maintain
16 health care insurance coverage or recover from the impacts of health
17 care costs up to and including bankruptcy and homelessness; and

18 WHEREAS, A national universal health care program is the most
19 efficient and cost-effective means of providing access to health care
20 for everyone and eliminating the economic, physical and mental health
21 pain and suffering so many Americans are experiencing due to lack of
22 timely access to health care and/or debt incurred; and

23 WHEREAS, A single-payer health plan in the state of Washington
24 would replace the state's current multipayer system in which
25 individuals, private businesses, and government entities pay public
26 and private insurers for health care coverage; and

27 WHEREAS, This health plan would establish a state agency to
28 finance all medically necessary health care with substantial savings
29 compared with the existing multipayer system of public and private
30 insurers; and

31 WHEREAS, This health plan would reduce financial barriers to
32 access care and the growing number of residents with inadequate
33 coverage. By reducing administrative and other waste, including

1 health insurance company profits and excessive prices for drugs,
2 hospitals, and medical devices, it would save money on health care;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Washington businesses and workers will benefit by
5 lowering the cost of health care, removing the burden of unfunded and
6 inadequate coverage, and allowing businesses to compete more
7 effectively on national and international markets. Businesses will
8 also benefit directly by removing the cost of selecting and
9 implementing health insurance programs for their workers, a billion-
10 dollar expenditure for businesses in the state; and

11 WHEREAS, The current system of fragmented private health
12 insurance is the main obstacle to expanding access to health care
13 because it promotes administrative waste, both in the processing of
14 bills by providers and in the administration of a health insurance
15 system with its many separate health insurance companies, each
16 offering a large variety of separate plans, each plan involving
17 separate pricing schemes; and

18 WHEREAS, The large number of independent companies and health
19 plans forces each provider to operate an entire back office with
20 billing clerks and other personnel to deal with billing and
21 negotiating prices for services and vastly inflating the cost for
22 providing health care; and

23 WHEREAS, The failures of the current private health insurance
24 system allow many opportunities to do better. Our health care
25 problems are not inevitable, not the result of technology or
26 "consumers" insatiable greed. They are the result of bad
27 institutions: Private health insurance and for-profit medicine whose
28 financial incentives favor sickness and treatment over prevention and
29 recovery. We have made mistakes in designing our health care system
30 and we are paying for those mistakes. But that means that we can
31 design a better system; and

32 WHEREAS, Replacing an inefficient, inequitable, and destructive
33 health care finance system with a fair system will promote economic
34 efficiency, better health, and good public policy; and

35 WHEREAS, Because the failures of our health care system most
36 dramatically harm marginalized communities, creating a system of
37 universal access, free point-of-service care and standardized
38 reimbursements will not only make health care less expensive, it will
39 also make it fairer and more equitable. Instead of being a system

1 that destroys future opportunity for many, it will be a system which
2 empowers communities through their newfound health and independence;

3 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the
4 federal government:

5 (1) Create a universal health care program to ensure that every
6 resident of Washington state and our country has timely access to
7 health care services without incurring crippling familial debt;

8 (2) Absent federal government action on the request in subsection
9 (1) of this memorial, partner with the state of Washington to reduce
10 barriers and allow the state to successfully implement a single-payer
11 health system for the people of Washington such as passing HR 6270
12 (by Rep. Ro Khanna, CA-17) in Congress which will allow states to
13 create their own universal health care programs; or

14 (3) Absent federal government action on the requests in
15 subsections (1) and (2) of this memorial with the appropriate federal
16 agencies, work to grant Washington state the appropriate waivers to
17 remove the restrictions on the state's ability to create a universal
18 health care system.

19 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
20 transmitted to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the
21 United States, the Secretary of the United States Department of
22 Health and Human Services, the Secretary of the United States
23 Department of Labor, the federal agencies involved with granting the
24 requested necessary waivers, the President of the United States
25 Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, each member of
26 Congress from the State of Washington."

EFFECT: Enumerates the proposed items that this Senate Joint
Memorial is asking for consideration of from the federal government.

Clarifies the request for the federal government to create a
universal health care program to ensure that every resident of
Washington state and our country has timely access to health care
services without incurring crippling familial debt rather than just
to ensure the access for every resident of our country.

Clarifies that absent federal government action on the other
requests, the federal government may grant Washington state the
appropriate waivers to remove the restrictions on the state's ability
to create a universal health care system.

Adds two new statements related to Article 25 of the Universal
Declaration of Human Rights ratified by the United Nations declares
health care is a human right and a quote by Reverend Dr. Martin
Luther King, Jr.

Updates the federal legislation number to reflect the current
bill introduction in the 118th Congress. Amends the list of

recipients of the Senate Joint Memorial to include the secretary of the United States department of labor.

--- **END** ---