

3  
6-17-23

June 17, 2023



Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor and Members of City Council,

My name is Jonathan Krall. Before I get started on my main topic, I'd like to express support for my Duke Street friends and their request for high-quality transit that does not get stuck in traffic. But my purpose here is to speak up for Medicare for All.

I am here with my Medicare For All friends to present this petition to you. The petition asks that you pass a resolution of support that would direct Congress to pass the Medicare For All bills currently under consideration. By doing so, you would add Alexandria to the chorus of over 100 communities across the USA that have passed such resolutions.

These signatures represent the work of volunteers from Grassroots Alexandria and the Northern Virginia Democratic Socialists of America and the support of our allies, Our Revolution Virginia and Tenants and Workers United. These petition signatures were gathered at farmers' markets, shopping centers, and apartment complexes all across Alexandria.

We have all worked hard to gather these 330 signatures, all from Alexandria City. People who we talked to were mostly supportive, reflecting the majority support that exists in the United States as a whole.

We did this work and are doing this work because we are committed to the idea that healthcare is a human right and that barriers to access, such as exploitative business models, should be reduced or eliminated.

According to the census bureau, over 12,000 Alexandrians have no health insurance. I can only assume that many more are unable to do what I do, which is to pay my medical bills even when I barely understand them. Our healthcare system needs to be changed.

I understand that a majority of you on our City Council do support this effort. I thank you for your commitment to the health of Alexandria and ask that we work together to pass a resolution in support of Medicare For All.

Thank you for your time and attention,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Krall', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jonathan Krall Member, Grassroots Alexandria Steering Committee

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6-17-23

## Alexandria City Council Public Hearing

### ACT Public Comment

June 17, 2023

Good Morning, and thank you for this opportunity to speak at this City Council Hearing. My name is Saba Fentaw, and I am Community Organizer at African Communities Together. ACT is a national nonprofit dedicated to improving the lives of African immigrants and empowering them to fight for the dignity and respect they deserve. In this role, we support the tenants at Southern Towers in their fight against displacement, which is why we are here before you today to uplift their request for the city to stand in solidarity with the tenants and publicly condemn CIM's actions.

CIM has implemented a new utility billing system that is adding to the financial burden of our community members. Under previous ownership at Southern Towers, tenants were only required to pay a flat rate of \$20/person for water and \$15 for trash. CIM is now charging tenants for all utilities and associated fees, resulting in a significant increase in living costs in addition to the already significant increases in rent. For example, tenants who previously only had to pay roughly \$55 for water and trash are now seeing utility bills of roughly \$197 and upwards. One tenant even received a bill for almost \$500. Additionally, tenants are now faced with inconsistencies in their billing, which makes financial planning difficult. There are also discrepancies in how the tenants are being billed. While tenants in the Graham are charged for their actual electric usage, tenants in the other four buildings on the property are tasked with sharing the total utility bill associated with their building, and their portion is determined based on the occupancy and square footage of their unit.

This billing system is just one of the many ways in which CIM has shown that they prioritize profit over human lives and are willing to pass expenses onto cost-burdened tenants.

The tenants at Southern Towers are in dire need of your support. Blue-collar workers and members of the immigrant community are being pushed out of their homes, and as we consider the redevelopment of the West End, we cannot allow predatory corporations like CIM to capitalize off of the displacement of the very communities that built our neighborhoods.

With this in mind, we hope City officials can come together and publicly condemn CIM's actions and compel them to meet tenant demands.

Thank you for your consideration.

**Alexandria City Council Public Hearing**

**Tariq Dafalla Public Comment**

June 17, 2023

Good morning. My name is Tariq Dafalla, and up until this week, I was a tenant at Southern Towers, which as you know, was bought by the CIM Group in 2020.

Although CIM claims they are “community-focused,” their actions have made it clear that they would rather contribute to the displacement of working- class families, than provide stable and safe housing. Tenants have met with CIM on numerous occasions to discuss our concerns and explain the struggles we face, but we still find ourselves dealing with unfair pricing practices, mold, and maintenance issues. Our community is seeing rent increases ranging from 6% to 14%, and our parking fees are nearly double what neighboring properties charge. Additionally, while rent used to be all-inclusive, CIM is now making us pay for utilities separately, even though our rent has gone up significantly. These pricing practices make it clear to us that CIM prioritizes profit over human lives.

I have personally experienced CIM's unjust practices, which has caused significant hardships for me. Due to my hospitalization for high cholesterol and blood pressure, I was unable to pay my rent and fell behind. Upon my release from the hospital, CIM gave me a five- day notice to pay the entire amount or vacate the premises. This added stress to my already vulnerable situation and affected both me and my family. I couldn't work much during my illness, and my income suffered as a result. Unfortunately, many members of our community are facing similar challenges. This unfair treatment by CIM not only places additional financial burden on us but also contributes to the displacement of immigrant communities, which play a crucial role in the social fabric of Alexandria.

We kindly request your support by publicly condemning CIM's actions. By publicly denouncing their practices and advocating for tenant rights, we hope to bring about positive change. Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Alexandria City Council Public Hearing**

**Eden Kidane Public Comment**

June 17, 2023

Good morning. My name is Eden Kidane, and I am a tenant at Southern Towers. I have lived in Southern Towers for almost four years. Today I am here to share my experience regarding the new utility billing system implemented by CIM, which has caused significant financial hardship for me and my Family.

As my neighbor mentioned previously, CIM's new billing system has resulted in additional financial burdens for us. With five children to care for and a low-wage job, I already face considerable financial responsibilities. Under the previous ownership at Southern Towers, we were only required to pay a flat rate of \$20 per person for water and \$15 for trash. Now, my utility bill is \$400 a month, on top of rent increases, leading to a substantial increase in living costs on my family. What makes matters worse is that the bills are inconsistent, making it challenging to plan and budget accordingly.

In light of these circumstances, I kindly request your support in publicly condemning CIM's actions and advocating for fair practices. Specifically, I urge you to request CIM to charge tenants based on actual electric usage and the actual square footage of our units. This would ensure that utility costs are more equitable and aligned with our specific needs and living conditions.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Your support in addressing this issue would make a significant difference in improving the lives of myself and my community.

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6-17-23



### **Petition to the Members of the Alexandria Virginia City Council:**

More than a decade after the passage of the federal Affordable Care Act, over 12,900 people — 8.3 percent of Alexandria residents — remain uninsured, and thousands more are underinsured. Most of Alexandria's uninsured residents are Black and Hispanic, leading to significant racial disparities in quality of health care, patient outcomes, and life expectancy in the City of Alexandria.

The passage of national, improved Medicare For All would guarantee universal, comprehensive health coverage to all Alexandria residents -- without copays, deductibles, premiums, or out-of-pocket costs. It would also eliminate the need for employer-sponsored health insurance, saving the Alexandria city government more than \$9.5 million per year and relieve local businesses of the burden of providing health insurance to employees.

**This is why we are asking the Alexandria City Council to pass the proposed resolution to endorse the Medicare For All Act (H.R. 3421 and S. 1655) in the United States Congress.**

Similar resolutions have been passed in cities such as Washington DC, Philadelphia, Boston, Tampa, and New Orleans – as well as locally in Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Charles County, and Annapolis, Maryland. With this resolution, Alexandria has the opportunity to make history as the first locality in Virginia to endorse the Medicare For All Act, and we urge the councilmembers to take advantage of this opportunity by passing this resolution.

**Submitted by coalition partners:**

**Grassroots Alexandria  
Democratic Socialists of America, NoVA Branch  
Our Revolution Virginia  
Tenants and Workers United**





First Name	Last Name	City	Zip
Valentine	Kass	Alexandria	22314
Nancy	Kincaid	Alexandria	22314
Anna	Solovyeva	Alexandria	22314
Faatimah	Muhammad	Alexandria	22314
Michael	Pagano	Alexandria	22314
Julie	Holcere	Alexandria	22314
Meredith	Schafer	Alexandria	22314
Andrea	Stowers	Alexandria	22314
John	Vail	Alexandria	22314
Dino	Drudi	Alexandria	22314
Steve	Dilorenzo	Alexandria	22314
Eliza	Savage	Alexandria	22302
Tina	Chovanec	Alexandria	22314
Sean	Porse	Alexandria	22314
Th	Schultz	Alexandria	22314
Ulia	Mayele	Alexandria	22314
Ed	Kemp	Alexandria	22301
Anne	Germain	Alexandria	22301
Arleen	Zola	Alexandria	22314
Jeanette	Shepherd	Alexandria	22314
Kristen	Woodiwiss	Alexandria	22301
Suzanne	Rathlev	Alexandria	22301
Brett	Manning	Alexandria	22305
Tara	Fleming	Alexandria	22314
Helene	Cooper	Alexandria	22301
Richard	Cecil	Alexandria	22304
Larry	Johnson	Alexandria	22314
Charles	Kreitzer	Alexandria	22314
Kayre	Kreitzer	Alexandria	22314
Laura	Killalea	Alexandria	22301
Veronica	Benitez	Alexandria	22305
Ashley	Sanchez	Alexandria	22305
Elisa	Valdez	Alexandria	22305
Elena	Molchanova	Alexandria	22314

Monika	Thiele	Alexandria	22305
Katie	Finn	Alexandria	22301
Luc	Murphy	Alexandria	22301
Brian	Noble	Alexandria	22301
Shawn	Dawley	Alexandria	22305
Glenn	Johnson	Alexandria	22301
Thomas	Ham	Alexandria	22314
Elizabeth	Armenti	Alexandria	22305
Stephanie	Griffin	Alexandria	22305
Robin	Ludt	Alexandria	22305
James	Rawlings	Alexandria	22302
Yoslin	Gonzalez	Alexandria	22305
Daisy	Vincente	Alexandria	22305
Alessandra	Guevara	Alexandria	22305
Keyna	Berrios	Alexandria	22305
Paul	Volpe	Alexandria	22305
Cynthia	Westlund	Alexandria	22305
Julie	Grothman	Alexandria	22301
Maggie	Rettig	Alexandria	22301
Julia	Carney	Alexandria	22301
Jomarie	Hoholik	Alexandria	22305
Diane	Gunion	Alexandria	22302
Frank	Gunion	Alexandria	22302
Louis	Cabana	Alexandria	22307
Brooke	Hobbie	Alexandria	22305
Brian	DeRocher	Alexandria	22301
Cedar	Dvorin	Alexandria	22304-3821
Katherine	Martin	Alexandria	22305
Richard	Chapman	Alexandria	22304-1034
Roberta	Finkelstein	Alexandria	22301
Toni	Maschler	Alexandria	22301
Ben	Winograd	Alexandria	22305
Daniel	Moshenberg	Alexandria	22301
Laurie	MacNamara	Alexandria	22301
Naomi	Klein	Alexandria	22301



Melissa	Rosario	Alexandria	22314
Annette	Licitra	Alexandria	22301
Helena	Khazdozian	Alexandria	22302
Carol	Corso	Alexandria	22314
John	Coggin	Alexandria	22305
michael	mauer	Alexandria	22314-3248
Tim	Beaty	Alexandria	22305
Terry	Hussey	Alexandria	22314
Joanne	Lannigan	Alexandria	22314
Alan	Friedman	Alexandria	22301
Jennifer	Whitlock	Alexandria	22305
Dorothy	Cocolin	Alexandria	22304
Nicholas	Hildebidle	Alexandria	22305
Phyllis	Lawrence	Alexandria	22302
ellen	lovet	Alexandria	22314
Joanne	Goodwin	Alexandria	22301
April	Lopez	Alexandria	22301
Robin	L	Alexandria	22314
Ginny	Richards	Alexandria	22301
Victoria	Wynn	Alexandria	22311
Julie	Jakopic	Alexandria	22305
Jonathan	Stovall	Alexandria	22301
Alison	Damaskos	Alexandria	22305
Vince	Shearer	Alexandria	22301
Emelia	Hepper	Alexandria	22314
Todd	Gray	Alexandria	22314
Rebecca	Rosenberg	Alexandria	22305
Keegan	Herschel	Alexandria	22301
Nora	Bradshaw	Alexandria	22305
Hattie	Gore	Alexandria	22302
Montse	Learner	Alexandria	22301
Jennifer	Salan	Alexandria	22314-2110
Dave	Jakes	Alexandria	22301
Jennifer	Turner	Alexandria	22301
Marie	Whittaker	Alexandria	22301



Dina-Maria	Deringer	Alexandria	22301
Raymond	Lannigan	Alexandria	22314-2555
Emily	Allen	Alexandria	22305
Anthony	Miller	Alexandria	22304
Stefanie	Gans	Alexandria	22305
Mark	Landes	Alexandria	22314
Andy	Behr	Alexandria	22304-6325
Ann	Vogel	Alexandria	22301
Glenn	Sewell	Alexandria	22301
Zeina	Azzam	Alexandria	22314
Douglas	Bossart	Alexandria	22314-4388
Hailey	McLaughlin	Alexandria	22301
Gabriela	Frank	Alexandria	22314
Julia	Heals	Alexandria	22314
Nancy	Blethen	Alexandria	22314
Kevin	Dohmen	Alexandria	22301
Tiffany	Porter	Alexandria	22304
Rachel	Booher	Alexandria	22305
Lexi	White	Alexandria	22311
Andrew	Cuan	Alexandria	22305
William	Nichols	Alexandria	22305
Rebecca	Holder	Alexandria	22314
Deirdre	MacNeil	Alexandria	22314
Crystal	Rawls	Alexandria	22304
Lisa	Williams	Alexandria	22301
howard	weiss	Alexandria	22314
Patricia	Langan	Alexandria	22314
Kevin	Pace	Alexandria	22305
Lisa	Neurohr	Alexandria	22305
Lisa	Cohen	Alexandria	22314
Vicki	Hawarden	Alexandria	22314
Meg	Ziemann	Alexandria	22305
Jennifer	Fletcher	Alexandria	22305
Lisa	Thompson	Alexandria	22301
Cathleen	Phelps	Alexandria	22314-3116

Sarah	Wholey	Alexandria	22301
Clare	Cherkasky	Alexandria	22305
Wilton	Corkern	Alexandria	22314
Katherine	Markoski	Alexandria	22302
Lee	Taylor-Penn	Alexandria	22305-2421
Anna	Tedeschi	Alexandria	22314
John	Waters	Alexandria	22314
John	Mickley	Alexandria	22314
Aaron	Gilary	Alexandria	22305
Cynthia	Vint	Alexandria	22304
Joanne	Broderick	Alexandria	22314
Kfir	Levy	Alexandria	22301
Harriet	Hirsch	Alexandria	22314
Nick	Tourville	Alexandria	22314
Sarah	Zapolsky	Alexandria	22301
Karyn	Castro	Alexandria	22305
Donna	Gupton	Alexandria	22301
Cheryl	Pellerin	Alexandria	22314
Terrell	Graves	Alexandria	22301
Joseph	Strickland	Alexandria	22301
Jen	Howard	Alexandria	22301
Ashley	Edmiston	Alexandria	22314
Michelle	Ellia	Alexandria	22301
Vance	Beauregard	Alexandria	22305
Carolyn	Schroeder	Alexandria	22314
Sondra	Stallard	Alexandria	22314
Yen	Nguyen	Alexandria	22301
Adrienne	Buskard	Alexandria	22314-2604
Andrew	Raycroft	Alexandria	22301
Bill	Campbell	Alexandria	22314
Nawfal	Kulam	Alexandria	22314
Elizabeth	Orlan	Alexandria	22301
Clarence	Geter	Alexandria	22311
Robin	Scott	Alexandria	22314
Thomas	Raycroft	Alexandria	22314



Charles	Jackson	Alexandria	22301
Cynthia	Harrison	Alexandria	22314
Kalyn	Jones	Alexandria	22305
James	Miceli	Alexandria	22301
Stacy	Langsdale	Alexandria	22314
John	Hawkins	Alexandria	22314
Steve	Ly	Alexandria	22301
Benjamin	Laszewski	Alexandria	22301-1309
Farhan	M	Alexandria	22314
Julie	Grothman	Alexandria	22301
Ashley	Rush	Alexandria	22301
Christine	Fitzpatrick	Alexandria	22301
Jeff	Howard	Alexandria	22301
Jim	Kirkland	Alexandria	22314
Angela	Esposito	Alexandria	22314
Breanna	Shinn	Alexandria	22314
Con	Kenney	Alexandria	22305
Jim	Durham	Alexandria	22304
Jessica	Lenderts	Alexandria	22301
Kathleen	Clark	Alexandria	22305
Sarah	Pihonak	Alexandria	22305
Jack	Soule	Alexandria	22301
Dianne	Harris	Alexandria	22305
Georgia	Leser	Alexandria	22302
Arielle	Wilson-Dodard	Alexandria	22304-3085
Sara	Gronich	Alexandria	22314
Sharon	Urch	Alexandria	22305
Aimee	Breaux	Alexandria	22305
Jon	Hays	Alexandria	22301
Samantha	Orozco	Alexandria	22314
Nora	Strickland	Alexandria	22301
Robert	Shapiro	Alexandria	22302
Janice	Hughes	Alexandria	22314
Valeria	Osei	Alexandria	22305
Kelly	Shannon	Alexandria	22301



Melissa	Roy	Alexandria	22314
Bobby	White	Alexandria	22301
Nancy	Maddox	Alexandria	22314
Cassidy	Clark	Alexandria	22304
Achille	Parmentier	Alexandria	22301
Patrick	O'Connell	Alexandria	22314
Caitlin	Wang Fleisig	Alexandria	22305
Katlyn	Cotton	Alexandria	22314
Kathleen	Harper	Alexandria	22314
Andrew	Hopkins	Alexandria	22305
Robert	Muehler	Alexandria	22301
Patricia	Braun	Alexandria	22301
Emily	Morris	Alexandria	22314
Jordan	Lewis	Alexandria	22314
Lionel	Jackson	Alexandria	22302
Dru	Burns	Alexandria	22314
hilen	meirovich	Alexandria	22301
Jordan	Gibbons	Alexandria	22305
Melissa	Milstrey	Alexandria	22314
Jenny	Yung	Alexandria	22304
Lin	Burton	Alexandria	22301
Michele	Gronich	Alexandria	22314
Susan	Walker	Alexandria	22305
Julia	Slayden	Alexandria	22305
Osgood	Bender	Alexandria	22301
J	O	Alexandria	22314
Paul R	Hunter	Alexandria	22301
Kaylin	Schreiber	Alexandria	22301
Sally	Macklin	Alexandria	22314
Alexandra	Purcell	Alexandria	22301
Nick	Forsberg	Alexandria	22301
Chris	B	Alexandria	22314
Sindy	Carballo	Alexandria	22305
Eduardo	Santos	Alexandria	22311
James	Lewis	Alexandria	22304

Mark	Gronich	Alexandria	22314
Lyra	McMillan	Alexandria	22301
Abdul	Conteh	Alexandria	22311
James	Kellaris	Alexandria	22302-1802
Alana	Norris Bermudez	Alexandria	22304
Gillie	Campbell	Alexandria	22302-4210
Glen	Pine	Alexandria	22304
Beth	Stanley	Alexandria	22314
Annmarie	Yoder	Alexandria	22314-2440
Harriet	Green	Alexandria	22305
John	Kling	Alexandria	22314
Jill	Murphy	Alexandria	22301
Jose	de la Cruz	Alexandria	22314
Savannah	Sierco	Alexandria	22314
Michael	Jacobs	Alexandria	22305
Tammy	Jackson	Alexandria	22301
Holly	Johnson	Alexandria	22314
Randy	McCracken	Alexandria	22314
Thomas	Savino	Alexandria	22314
Jonathan	Hung	Alexandria	22301
Chris	Boyce	Alexandria	22305
Pat	J	Alexandria	22305
Howard	Jones	Alexandria	22305
Rusty	Eller	Alexandria	22301
Kelli	Rogowski	Alexandria	22301
Erin	Flynn-Pace	Alexandria	22301
Vivian	Ramirez	Alexandria	22301
Mercedes	Ortiz-Olivieri	Alexandria	22305
Alexander	Richey	Alexandria	22301
Kylie	Beauregard	Alexandria	22305
Claione	Rojas	Alexandria	22301
Courtney	Fuenzalida	Alexandria	22314
Eliza you	Savage	Alexandria	22302
Milady	Cabrera	Alexandria	22305
Michelle	Runge	Alexandria	22314



Mesac	Ajanel	Alexandria	22311
Maribel	Meneses	Alexandria	22311
Hadja	Balde	Alexandria	22311
Lee	Richards	Alexandria	22311
Adam	Noce	Alexandria	22311
Steffen	Krause	Alexandria	22304
Helen	Lemus	Alexandria	22311
Yolanda	Telleria	Alexandria	22311
Mrunmai	Joshi	Alexandria	22305
Jacqueline	Dargan	Alexandria	22302
YOSEPH	ESAYAS	Alexandria	22311
Roberto	Gomez	Alexandria	22304
Randy	Maddox	Alexandria	22314
William	Sullebarger	Alexandria	22314
Dennis	Wagner	Alexandria	22301
Andrew	Ormand	Alexandria	22301
Anne	Ruppel	Alexandria	22301
Cara	Bachenheimer	Alexandria	22301
Hope	Comer	Alexandria	22301
Annabell	Bivens	Alexandria	22301
Mollie	Booth	Alexandria	22301
Catherine	Ham	Alexandria	22314
David AL	Lagos	Alexandria	22305
Esh	Guardado	Alexandria	22305
Giacomo	Bergamo	Alexandria	22305
Varun	Gopinath	Alexandria	22301
Imer	Arnautovic	Alexandria	22301
Katie	Orozco	Alexandria	22314
Kinsey	Laing	Alexandria	22305
Katy	Capsalis	Alexandria	22305
Steve	Gornstein	Alexandria	22305
John	Alexander	Alexandria	22312
Janette	Dimitrova	Alexandria	22312
Kelly	Cooper	Alexandria	22305
Catherine	Lougheed	Alexandria	22305



Robert	Duhut	Alexandria	22301
Melanie	Parles	Alexandria	22301
Jennifer	Peltch	Alexandria	22304
Erik	Olson	Alexandria	22305
Michele	Walz	Alexandria	22305
Christine	Grigg	Alexandria	22301
Erica	Meisenheimer	Alexandria	22314
Jessica	Hartfeld	Alexandria	22301
Kristen	Webber	Alexandria	22302
Wade	Doorey	Alexandria	22301
Ronny	Briceño	Alexandria	22305

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**RESOLUTION TO ENDORSE THE MEDICARE FOR ALL ACT**

**WHEREAS**, every person in the City of Alexandria, the Washington Metropolitan Area, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the entire United States deserves high quality health care; and

**WHEREAS**, although the Commonwealth of Virginia has made great strides in increasing our health care coverage through Medicaid expansion, we struggle to ensure quality health care for all, as more than 12,900 people, or 8.3% of residents, in the City of Alexandria remain uninsured<sup>[1]</sup>, and many more are underinsured; and

**WHEREAS**, more than 3,500 Black people, or 11%, and 6,100 Hispanic people, or nearly 24%, in the City of Alexandria remain uninsured<sup>[2]</sup>, and many more are underinsured; and

**WHEREAS**, health care expenditure comprises more than \$9,600,000 of the City of Alexandria's budget<sup>[3]</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Alexandria suffers from racial disparities in quality of health care and patient outcomes, clearly demonstrated by the unequal rates of morbidity and mortality of Black residents in the City of Alexandria during the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>[4]</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, more than 25% of pregnant people in the city do not receive early prenatal care although it is known that babies born to those who do not receive prenatal care are three times more likely to have a low birth weight and five times more likely to die<sup>[5]</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, there are racial disparities in life expectancy in the City of Alexandria with white residents expected to live nearly 7 years longer than Black residents (85.4 and 78.5 years, respectively)<sup>[6]</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, Black and white residents of the City of Alexandria have similar rates of cancer diagnosis, but Black residents are more likely to die from cancer compared with white residents<sup>[7]</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, hypertension hospitalization rates among Black residents of the City of Alexandria are 12 times the rate of hospitalization among white residents, and hospitalization rates due to long-term complications from diabetes among Hispanic residents are four times the rate of hospitalization among white residents<sup>[8]</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, 50% of undocumented children and 5% of all children in Virginia are uninsured, and 27% of the total uninsured population in Virginia are non-citizens<sup>[9]</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, City of Alexandria's culture and tourism depends heavily on its restaurant industry, an industry with only 31% health insurance coverage nationally before the pandemic<sup>[10]</sup> and which now faces significant loss of income, while many restaurant industry workers frequently oscillate between Medicaid and other insurance or no insurance due to unstable wages, leading to interruptions of care for chronic disease management, which worsens outcomes<sup>[11]</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, many people delay seeking needed health care due to an inability to pay<sup>[12]</sup>, leading to a sicker and poorer population which is significantly more likely to develop serious illness if exposed to COVID-19 or other infectious disease, and will subsequently face higher mortality rates from infectious diseases; and

**WHEREAS**, homeless populations use emergency departments at higher rates, and are more likely to have repeat visits than their housed counterparts, which has been linked to a poor understanding of the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* and Medicaid enrollment criteria, and leads to increases hospital emergency room costs and to preventable deaths among the homeless population<sup>[13]</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, medical bills are a leading cause of bankruptcy in this country<sup>[14]</sup> and more than 25% of residents of Virginia report past-due medical debt which is above the national average<sup>[15]</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused increases in applications for Medicaid<sup>[16]</sup> and other health care programs managed by the Commonwealth of Virginia; and

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to record levels of unemployment, loss of employer-sponsored health insurance, a severely strained health care system, widespread illness, and taken a profound toll on our community's mental health, all of which is placing significant demands on our health care system; and

**WHEREAS**, the ever-increasing costs of health care, which are further elevated due to the pandemic, may challenge our already strapped state and municipal budgets<sup>[17]</sup>, and COVID-19 related treatment is likely to cost uninsured patients tens of thousands of dollars<sup>[18]</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, in order to equitably and effectively address the health care needs in the City of Alexandria, including the additional burden of the COVID-19 crisis, we must urge the United States Congress to expand health insurance coverage to provide every resident of the United States comprehensive health care without any cost-sharing; and

**WHEREAS**, only comprehensive universal health coverage can assure people that, no matter what health condition is ultimately responsible for their symptoms, or whatever treatment becomes necessary, all residents of the U.S. will be financially protected; and



**WHEREAS**, the *Medicare for All Act* would guarantee all residents full coverage for medically necessary health care without copays, deductibles, or other out-of-pocket costs,<sup>[19][20]</sup> provide full and comprehensive mental health services to all residents of the City of Alexandria, and provide long-term support services for people in the disability community and those with pre-existing conditions<sup>[21]</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, legislators in several states including California, New York, Maryland, and Washington have introduced bills in their legislatures that could potentially create state-based single-payer universal health care systems for their residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the *State-Based Universal Health Care Act* would amend the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* to authorize the establishment of, and provide support for, state-based universal health care systems that provide comprehensive health care to their residents<sup>[22]</sup>;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA:**

Vigorously SUPPORTS the enactment of federal legislation to provide universal and comprehensive health care for all residents of the United States including the residents of the City of Alexandria.

Specifically REQUESTS and VOICES SUPPORT for passage of the *Medicare for All Act* (H.R. 3421 & S. 1655) and *State-Based Universal Health Care Act* (H.R. 3775 - 117th Congress).

CALLS UPON the United States Congress to adopt federal legislation to provide universal, comprehensive health coverage with zero cost-sharing to all people in the United States.

THANKS the members of the U.S. Congress who have cosponsored the *Medicare for All Act* (H.R. 3421 & S. 1655), including U.S. Representatives Don Beyer and Robert C. Scott, for their continued support for a comprehensive single-payer universal health care system.

DIRECTS that a copy of this resolution be sent to the President of the United States, President of the United States Senate, Secretary of Health and Human Services, U.S. Speaker of the House, U.S. Senate Majority Leader, U.S. Senate Minority Leader, U.S. Senators Tim Kaine and Mark Warner, U.S. House Minority Leader, U.S. Representative Don Beyer and all other Representatives to the U.S. Congress from Virginia, Governor Glenn Youngkin, and Members of the City's delegation to, as well as the leadership of, the Virginia General Assembly.

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

- <sup>[1]</sup> U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=Alexandria%20city%20Health&t=Health%20Insurance&tid=ACST1Y2019.S2701&hidePreview=true&moe=false>
- <sup>[2]</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>[3]</sup> Summary Tables, City of Alexandria FY 2023 Approved Budget, [https://www.alexandriava.gov/sites/default/files/2022-06/Section%2006%20-%20Summary%20Tables\\_0.pdf#page=3](https://www.alexandriava.gov/sites/default/files/2022-06/Section%2006%20-%20Summary%20Tables_0.pdf#page=3)
- <sup>[4]</sup> City of Alexandria, June 2021, <https://www.alexandriava.gov/performance/info/dashboard.aspx?id=115279>
- <sup>[5]</sup> Health Matters in Alexandria, measurement period: 2020, last updated: February 2022, <http://www.healthmattersalexandria.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=325&localeId=2967>
- <sup>[6]</sup> Health Matters in Alexandria, measurement period: 2018-2020, last updated: June 2022, <http://www.healthmattersalexandria.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=8195&localeId=2967>
- <sup>[7]</sup> City of Alexandria's Community Health Assessment, 2019, [https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/health/info/CHA%20FINAL\\_small%20file.pdf#page=21](https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/health/info/CHA%20FINAL_small%20file.pdf#page=21)
- <sup>[8]</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>[9]</sup> Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis <https://www.thecommonwealthinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/For-Today-and-Tomorrow-Increasing-Health-Coverage-for-Undocumented-Virginians.pdf>
- <sup>[10]</sup> Toast Restaurant Industry Report 2019, <https://d2wle2ao9g8r9.cloudfront.net/resource-downloads/2019-Restaurant-Success-Report.pdf#page=13>
- <sup>[11]</sup> Annals of Internal Medicine 2017;167:424, <https://www.acpjournals.org/doi/full/10.7326/M17-1403>: An estimated 37-45 thousand Americans die per year for lack of health care coverage.
- <sup>[12]</sup> JPMorgan Chase Institute, January 2018, <https://www.jpmorganchase.com/content/dam/jpmc/jpmorgan-chase-and-co/institute/pdf/institute-tax-refunds-healthcare-report.pdf#page=17>
- <sup>[13]</sup> Homelessness and Emergency Medicine: A Review of the Literature, Society for Academic Emergency Medicine, January 11, 2018, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/acem.13358>
- <sup>[14]</sup> American Journal of Public Health, March 2019, <http://www.pnhp.org/docs/AJPHBankruptcy2019.pdf>
- <sup>[15]</sup> Urban Institute, March 2016, <https://apps.urban.org/features/medical-debt-in-america/>
- <sup>[16]</sup> Kaiser Family Foundation, December 2020, <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/analysis-of-recent-national-trends-in-medicare-and-chip-enrollment/>
- <sup>[17]</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, January 12, 2021, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/how-covid-19-harming-state-and-city-budgets>
- <sup>[18]</sup> Kaiser Family Foundation, April 2020, <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/estimated-cost-of-treating-the-uninsured-hospitalized-with-covid-19/>
- <sup>[19]</sup> H.R.1976 - Medicare for All Act of 2021, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1976>
- <sup>[20]</sup> S. 4204 - Medicare for All Act of 2022, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/4204>
- <sup>[21]</sup> Modern Healthcare, March 2019, <https://www.modernhealthcare.com/politics-policy/sanders-medicare-all-expands-long-term-care-benefits>
- <sup>[22]</sup> H.R.5010 - State-Based Universal Health Care Act of 2021, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/3775>

City Council Testimony June 17th, 2023

Dear Mayor and Members of City Council,

I am sure you know by now that I am an opponent of the proposed Business Improvement District and that I have organized opposition to this proposal. I would like to give you an update since this is the last public hearing this summer, and I know some of the people I am working with would like to get back to focusing on their businesses, and not this unwelcome tax increase. We have had several meetings, talked to business and property owners, put up signs, and yes, banners, and sent letters to all the residential properties that will be taxed. If the proposal is not withdrawn, we will continue to do the work, and I think we will have no problem getting to the number that would make it statistically impossible for the BID supporters to get to %60 of owners, as laid out in the BID Guidelines.

Even if proponents, who have tried to get the largest property owners on board first, were to somehow argue that they had reached %60 of owners, the creation of a BID, is as the name implies, a tool to improve the district or to increase services, and in the words of your guidelines "for the purpose of providing additional, more complete or more timely services than may be needed or desired by the remainder of the city." The BID being proposed is not planning to increase services, or take over services the city currently does. The City has done a great job since the 2017 BID proposal, putting up banners, putting out planters, planting trees, keeping our streets clean, and marketing Old Town, which continues to be award winning, through Visit Alexandria. BID's are created to solve problems, and there is no problem that has been identified. Old Town is not Georgetown in the 80's, and it is not filled with vacancies. Most vacancies are in properties transitioning, as downtown business districts do. It is up to you whether "a need exists to provide some of the services authorized by law..." The key words here are "you may determine..." Or you may not.

I think Old Town is thriving. Today, I walked through the nation's oldest farmers market, which fills the plaza in front of City Hall. Later today I will go to the Portside Festival, which I went to last night as well, and I will celebrate the opening of the Maritime Heritage Center, something I have advocated for since 2008. It is great to see it finally happening, with the help of the city and private donations, and investors. All this voluntary effort and partnerships are leading to great positive changes for Old Town. Old Town is changing. Soon there will be over 300 new residents living near King St. as many of our offices are converted to residential. This will also help our retail corps. There are more hotel rooms, and more Air B and B's that also bring people to town to visit. Our proximity to DC, as well as our own historic sites, means that there will always be reasons to come to Old Town. The closing of the 100 Block of King St., another thing I have advocated for, because of public safety and because walking by foot should be the primary mode of transportation there, has come to be, and it is now a destination.

Even though I have never been a member, or been asked to be a member, or been assisted by any of the current proponents of the BID, I know they are an important part of the community and many businesses appreciate their representation and advocacy, and I hope that they will continue to exist and thrive. But here is where I must draw the line. They are asking me to pay the bill for the work they do, for which I receive no benefit. I paid over \$30,000 in property tax this week. A .10 cent increase would be a %9 increase would mean \$5,400 in



additional tax payments each year. That is a lot more than membership in the Old Town Business Association, The Chamber and Visit Alexandria together. And it would not be voluntary, I would be forced to pay this. I own the building where Taverna Cretekou is located at 820 King St. Next year will be the 50th year they have been there and the 50th year my family has owned the building. We are looking forward to a big celebration, an anniversary it shares with just a couple other restaurants, and the Torpedo Factory Art Center.

They have never been a member of the Business Association, the Chamber, or Visit Alexandria, and they are doing fine. Of course, they did not do so well during the pandemic, but neither OTBA, nor the city ever approached us to help during this time. We did not receive any grant money. I met with Charlotte Hall and Amy Rutherford to give them a chance to personally give me their pitch, and I have attended two presentations of OTBA, and feel like I have heard and given proponents a chance to convince me. They have not. The purpose of the BID, as far as I can discern, is to do what OTBA is already doing. The things they do are marketing, promotion, and events. Most of these events take place near the Waterfront, understandably. The meetings were poorly attended, and there were many of them, and their second deadline of May 31st has come and gone. They had hoped to add the tax in July, and then in December. I would argue that according to the guidelines, neither of these proposals is possible. The language in the guideline reads:

"If a non-profit BID corporation requests funding, in order to have the service district accord with the city's annual tax assessment valuation cycle and budget, the timing of the creation of the district is recommended to be the calendar year prior to the calendar year in which the assessment goes into effect. The tax would be presented with the City's other annual tax ordinance amendments."

I am not a lawyer, but the language in the guidelines seems to say that the tax increase must be considered at the same time as other tax ordinances, so not until next spring. And then it could only go into effect the following year.

Now, a final thought, if there is an appetite in Alexandria for a .10 cent tax increase, just think what could be done with the increase in revenue City wide. Montgomery County proposed such a tax this year and it would have given 220 million to its schools. According to the city Budget, that would raise 46 million in Alexandria. That would buy some nice open space, fund the affordable housing trust fund, keep our pools open longer, and pay our librarians what they deserve. I am sure we also have schools in need. If the city had raised the tax rate just .1 cent, it would have raised 4.6 Million and the city could give a grant to OTBA and other business organizations as it has done in the past through AEDP.

But a 10 cent increase on 489 properties, only some of whom want it or will benefit, will be a mistake. It is already dividing Old Town, when we should be uniting in celebrating our progress. We have just come out of a pandemic, and we are returning to full strength. Some small businesses may take it as a signal to close and move on. That will make Old Town less unique and special. And instead of increasing property value may actually decrease the value, as buyers may look at a higher tax rate, and with high interest rates, pass on Old Town.

One last thing, if we want Ambassadors, we should all be ambassadors. I was on the news about the water main break, and to promote Goodies Frozen Custard and Treats, and I have

been celebrating the new mural being put up at King and Alfred. I am constantly recommending to visitors where to go, and where to eat. Isn't this kind of appreciation of where we live something we all should be doing? I urge you to ask the OTBA to withdraw the proposed BID now, and let us get back to promoting the place where we live and work.