



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 6, 2017

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

DOCKET TITLE:

Consideration of Adoption of a Resolution for Affordable and Attainable Health Care in the City of Alexandria. [ROLL-CALL VOTE]

ISSUE: Consideration of Adoption of a Resolution for Affordable and Attainable Health Care in the City of Alexandria.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council adopt the attached resolution regarding Affordable and Attainable Health Care in the City of Alexandria.

BACKGROUND: The City of Alexandria's Strategic Plan for 2017 to 2022 states that the City will "work to reduce inequities in the health system, increase access to care for all residents, and provide a system of support for residents with behavioral health needs." Both the Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission, in its 2015 and 2016 annual reports, and the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria, in its Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for the City, also cite increased access to health care services as a key factor in ensuring healthy residents. In advance of any possible changes in access to affordable health care at the state and federal level, the Public Health Advisory Commission is seeking formal adoption of a resolution on this topic by the Alexandria City Council.

DISCUSSION: Changes in health care policy at the federal, state, regional, or local level have the potential to substantially affect the number of uninsured or underserved in Alexandria. 18.6% of Alexandrians, including approximately 31% of Alexandria's children, rely in whole or in part on state or federal programs such as Medicaid and Medicare for health coverage assistance; and approximately 6% of Alexandrians under age 65 are Affordable Care Act (ACA) exchange enrollees who benefit from ACA provisions such as required essential benefits, cost sharing, non-discrimination for pre-existing conditions, tax credits and subsidies. Also, approximately 13% of Alexandrians lack health insurance and, according to studies by the Institute of Medicine and Families USA, the uninsured are more likely to die prematurely than those with health care coverage. The uninsured are also less likely to have a reliable source of health care outside of the emergency room.

The Public Health Advisory Commission asks the Alexandria City Council to show strong opposition to: a) repeal of the ACA in whole or in part, or replacement of any of the ACA's provisions with any alternative, when such repeal or replacement would leave Alexandrians less able to afford and obtain quality health care services, or would leave Alexandria's health safety-net providers and public health system less able to provide quality health care services; b) cuts or changes in Medicaid or Medicare funding that would expose more Alexandrians to gaps in health coverage; and c) elimination or cuts to the Center for Disease Control's Prevention and Public Health Fund.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no fiscal impact in regard to the adoption of this resolution

ATTACHMENT: Proposed Resolution

STAFF:

Debra R. Collins, Deputy City Manager
Dr. Stephen Haering, Health Director