



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION

URGING CONGRESS TO PROTECT ACCESS TO QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE PROVIDED TO MILLIONS OF AMERICANS AND THOUSANDS OF COOK COUNTY RESIDENTS BY THE PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

WHEREAS, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, commonly called the Affordable Care Act (“ACA”) was adopted in 2010 to dramatically reduce the number of uninsured Americans and improve overall public health for the American people; and

WHEREAS, the ACA protects our working families against health insurance discrimination and denial for pre-existing conditions, provides subsidies to working families to offset the cost of health insurance, incentivizes states to expand Medicaid coverage for the working poor, and requires coverage of basic family health care needs in health insurance plans; and

WHEREAS, the Congressional Budget Office (“CBO”), the nonpartisan budget-scoring agency, estimated that between 2010-2019 the ACA would yield a projected reduction in the Country’s deficits of more than \$150 billion over that period; and

WHEREAS, the ACA, over the last six (6) years, has cut the overall uninsured rate in the United States from 15.7% to 8.6% and, among those ages 18-64, from 22.3% to 11.9%, and reduced the number of uninsured at our County health system from 70% to 30%; and

WHEREAS, thanks to the ACA, more than 1 million people in Illinois get insurance through the ACA marketplace or the expansion of Medicaid, and through CountyCare, the Cook County Health & Hospital System (“CCHHS”) which provides 140,000 Medicaid recipients with health care coverage, a number that could double in 2018; and

WHEREAS, the repeal of ACA would lead to a significant negative economic impact for Illinois as the Illinois Health & Hospital Association predicted the state could lose as much as \$11.6 billion to \$13.1 billion in annual economic activity, translating into a potential loss of 84,000 to 95,000 jobs, if Congress and President Trump repeal coverage for those 1 million people without a viable and comprehensive replacement plan; and

WHEREAS, thanks in large part to the ACA, the Cook County Health & Hospitals System (“CCHHS”) has been able to reduce its reliance on the annual taxpayer allocation by more than \$370 million due to the ACA and Medicaid expansion, a 75 percent decrease in local tax support since 2009, from \$481 million to \$111.5 million; and

WHEREAS, should the ACA be repealed or severely diminished, the annual loss of revenue for care provided by the Cook County Health & Hospitals System may likely exceed \$300 million annually and could be as high as \$800 million. Additionally, other hospitals and providers in Cook County would stand to lose more than \$300 million in reimbursements from our CountyCare Health Plan, which is on top of the hundreds of millions more dollars lost from other Medicaid health plans, and cuts mentioned in ACA repeal proposals thus far are unsustainable, unfair, callous and would require increased state or local revenues to meet the needs of the uninsured in Cook County; and

WHEREAS, a significant increase in the uninsured rate and amount of uncompensated care in the County and the region due to the loss of health insurance coverage for working families because of any repeal of the ACA would undermine the

“patient mix” of the CCHHS, reducing the financial success of the system and diminishing the quality of life of our residents; and

WHEREAS, the Republican-led Congress has made repeated efforts to repeal parts or all of the ACA, with the Senate recently passing the elimination of the individual mandate, a central tenet of the ACA that health policy experts and proponents say is essential to making the law work; and;

WHEREAS, the CBO reported that repealing said mandate would increase the number of uninsured by 13 million by 2027 and that health insurance premiums would rise by about 10 percent in most years over the next decade in the individual market created by the Affordable Care Act; and

WHEREAS, the Cook County Board of Commissioners, believes that access to quality, affordable health care is a human right, not a privilege, and is essential to the quality of life of families and individuals in Cook County and everywhere throughout our country; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of our federal, state and local officials to defend the issues and interests of their constituents, including advocating for access to quality, affordable health care coverage provided for by the Affordable Care Act;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the President and Cook County Board of Commissioners oppose the repeal of the Affordable Care Act and replacing it with any alternative that would not improve access to quality, affordable health care for all of our residents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President and Cook County Board of Commissioners oppose any measure that results in a loss of health insurance coverage by any American, weakens the ACA’s protection against health insurance discrimination or denial based on preexisting conditions, reduces the ACA’s subsidies to individuals for buying health care, or reduces the incentives for states to cover individuals through expanding Medicaid; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the County urges the Illinois Congressional Delegation, Illinois General Assembly, the Governor and members of the general public to oppose and resist any weakening of the protections of the Affordable Care Act for working families; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to the President of the United States, U.S. Speaker of the House, U.S. Senate Majority Leader, U.S. House Minority Leader, U.S. Senate Minority Leader, the Illinois Congressional Delegation, Governor of Illinois, President of the Illinois Senate, and Speaker of the Illinois House.