

PALM BEACH COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Meeting Date: May 19, 2009

() Consent (X) Regular
() Ordinance () Public Hearing

Submitted By: Administration

I. EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Motion and Title: Staff requests Board direction: regarding a Resolution in support of universal health insurance coverage, urging the United States Congress to enact legislation that is substantially similar to H.R. 676 (Conyers, M-14) known as the "United States National Health Care Act", without imposing additional mandates on county governments.

Summary: At the April 7, 2009 Board of County Commission meeting, Commissioner Shelley Vana requested Board discussion regarding support of H.R. 676, or similar legislation due to the rising costs of health insurance. H.R. 676 creates a single-payer universal health care system which would cover all necessary medical care including prescription drugs, hospital, surgical, outpatient services, primary and preventative care, emergency services, dental care, vision care and long-term care. Countywide (TKF)

Background and Justification: Several government agencies have sent Resolutions in support of H.R. 676 to the United States Congress, including Alachua County, Florida, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Since the introduction of HR 676 in January of 2007, other bills supporting a single-payer system have also been introduced in Congress. Staff seeks Board direction and discussion regarding the adoption of a Resolution that supports the concept of universal health care, while urging Congress and the Administration to refrain from imposing additional mandates on county governments.

Attachments:
1. Draft Resolution

Recommended by: _____
Department Director Date
Approved by: [Signature] 5/12/09
Assistant County Administrator Date

RESOLUTION NO. R-2009-

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA, SUPPORTING H.R. 676, KNOWN AS THE "UNITED STATES NATIONAL HEALTH CARE ACT" OR SIMILAR LEGISLATION WITHOUT IMPOSING ADDITIONAL MANDATES ON COUNTY GOVERNMENTS.

WHEREAS, Floridians face a continuing crisis in the accessibility and affordability of health care, with yearly insurance premiums increasing at a rate much greater than the general inflation rate, and

WHEREAS, as employers, county governments provide health benefits to the nearly three million county workers and their retirees nationwide, and the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners' annual cost for health benefits to its' employees in 2008 reached \$55.1M, and

WHEREAS, every person in Palm Beach County and in the United States of America deserves access to affordable, quality healthcare, and

WHEREAS, U.S. Representative John Conyers has introduced the "United States National Insurance Act," (H.R. 676), and this act would provide a universal, comprehensive, single-payer system of high quality national health insurance, and health benefits for the entire family whether you have a job or not, and

WHEREAS, the rising cost of health care can be reduced and best met by encouraging members of Congress and the Obama Administration to work swiftly toward a national single payer healthcare system, and

WHEREAS, various bills have been introduced in Congress, including HR 676 (United States National Health Care Act, also known as Expanded and Improved Medicare for All), with over 75 members of Congress including four (4) from Florida, including local Congressmen Robert Wexler and Alcee Hastings who have signed on as co-sponsors.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE PALM BEACH COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:

- 1. Supports single payer universal health insurance coverage, and urges and requests that the United States Congress enact and the President of the United States sign legislation that is substantially similar to the United States National Health Care Act, H.R. 676, or other legislation that provides for single payer universal coverage that is meaningful and actuarially sound, without imposing additional mandates on county governments.
2. That copies of this Resolution, duly authenticated, be transmitted to the Honorable Barack H. Obama, President of the United States, and to the United States Congress (Speaker of the House and Senate President) and to each Member of the Palm Beach County Congressional Delegation.

The foregoing resolution was offered by Commissioner _____ who moved for its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner _____, and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

- Commissioner John F. Koons, Chairman
Commissioner Burt Aaronson, Vice Chairman
Commissioner Karen T. Marcus
Commissioner Shelley Vana
Commissioner Steven L. Abrams
Commissioner Jess R. Santamaria
Vacant

The Chairperson thereupon declared the Resolution duly passed and adopted this

_____ day of _____, 2009.

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY

PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA, BY ITS BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

By: [Signature] Assistant County Attorney

By: _____ Deputy Clerk