

Preamble. Whereas, the current system of health care coverage in the State does not provide for the common good of all Maine residents; and

Whereas, the system of health care coverage in the State is complex and confusing, and all too often it provides people with inadequate coverage or no coverage at all; and

Whereas, every person in the State merits health care coverage; and

Whereas, the high costs of health care, due in part to waste and to excessive administrative costs, are financially catastrophic for many families; and

Whereas, the quality of life for Maine residents would improve if they could obtain the health care they need; and

Whereas, health care is an essential safeguard of human life and should be treated as a public good; and

Whereas, job losses resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic have exposed the limitations in terms of both health care and economic issues of employment-based health care coverage; and

Whereas, economic studies analyzing universal health care proposals at both the national and state levels have shown that such proposals would result in overall savings and would result in most people paying far less than they pay under the current system of health care coverage; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1. Develop legislation. Resolved: That the joint standing committee having jurisdiction over health care and insurance matters shall develop legislation establishing a system of health care coverage in the State that:

1. Ensures that all residents of the State possess comprehensive, publicly funded health care coverage;
2. Contains built-in mechanisms to lower the costs of health care;
3. Provides to every resident of the State all services determined to be medically necessary services by the board established in accordance with subsection 7;
4. Continues the existing practice of providing health care services through public and private providers of those services;
5. Provides residents of the State the freedom to choose their health care providers;
6. Provides prompt payments to health care providers at prevailing rates; and
7. Establishes a board to supervise program elements of the system of health care coverage. The board must consist of members who are representative of the State's population and who are appointed by the Governor, reviewed by the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health care and insurance matters and confirmed by the Senate.

Sec. 2. Report out legislation. Resolved: That, following the development of the legislation in accordance with section 1, the joint standing committee having jurisdiction

over health care and insurance matters shall report out a bill to the Legislature to implement, by 2024, its proposal.

SUMMARY

This initiated bill directs the joint standing committee having jurisdiction over health care and insurance matters to develop legislation to establish a system of universal health care coverage in the State and directs the joint standing committee to report out a bill to the Legislature to implement, by 2024, its proposal.