



STAFF REPORT
9/8/2021

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Dr. Gabriel D. Martin, City Manager; and
Celina Jimenez, Grants Manager

SUBJECT: Adopt Resolution No. 2021-54 in Support of Assembly Bill 1400 to Establish the California Guaranteed Health Care for All Act and Create CalCare, a Single-Payer Health Insurance Program for all California Residents

RECOMMENDATION:

Pursuant to the request of Mayor Hernandez and Council Member Beaman-Jacinto: Recommendation to adopt Resolution No. 2021-54 in support of Assembly Bill 1400, which would establish the California Guaranteed Health Care for All Act and create CalCare, a single-payer health insurance program for all California residents that is comprehensive, uniform, equitable and governed by the CalCare board.

BACKGROUND:

AB 1400, introduced by Assembly Members Ash Kalra, Alex Lee, and Miguel Santiago would do the following:

1. Establish a comprehensive universal single-payer health care coverage system for all California residents without discrimination, ensuring that affordable access to health care is a human right.
2. Establish a CalCare board of nine members that would have jurisdiction over enrollment policies, negotiate pricing, secure and allocate funding, and oversee all federal waivers.
3. Establish the CalCare Trust Fund in the State Treasury to provide a continuous and prudent source of funding for this program.

While the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act has done much to ameliorate the crisis of insufficient healthcare coverage in California, many residents are still left without adequate means to access necessary medical resources. AB 1400 seeks to address this issue by implementing a universal single-payer health care coverage system. Specifically, this bill calls for government oversight that would establish a cost control system, offer a wide range of medical benefits equal to or of greater quality than existing state and private provision, establish working

relationships with approved providers for accountability, and increase accessibility for disabled persons and underrepresented groups to reach the ultimate goal of eliminating health care disparities in the state of California.

In terms of eligibility and enrollment, every resident of the state of California would not only be eligible but entitled to CalCare membership, without any fees. Additionally, to address the continuously increasing population of out-of-state university students in the state, CalCare would allow higher education institutions to purchase coverage for non-resident students. CalCare also addresses high-cost prescription drugs and includes dietary and nutrition therapies, in addition to coverage for long-term services currently denied under many plans.

The state of California has a diverse population that requires a flexible health care coverage program to meet a range of needs. This legislation is a step in that direction, providing culturally-competent services through accommodations such as language interpretation, translation, and more integrated services for disabled Californians.

Lastly, the COVID-19 pandemic has only amplified the imperative for a more comprehensive, accessible, and transparent health care coverage system. CalCare would establish the CalCare Trust Fund in the State treasury, which would maintain an appropriate reserve of funding for responding to health emergencies such as epidemics, pandemics, or natural disasters.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the Recommended Action
2. Provide Alternative Direction

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution No. 2021-54
2. Medicare for All California Economic & Policy Considerations
3. Assembly Bill No. 1400 Text