

 <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">RESOLUTION # _____</p>	<p>ITEM # _____</p> <p>BOARD ACTION</p> <p>Adopted: _____</p> <p>For: _____</p> <p>Against: _____</p> <p>Abstain: _____</p> <p>Abs/Excd: _____</p> <p>Vote Req: _____</p> <p>Other Action: _____</p>	<p>HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES BOARD ACTION</p> <p>Adopted: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p>For: <u>8</u> _____</p> <p>Against: <u>0</u> _____</p> <p>Abstain: <u>0</u> _____</p> <p>Abs/Excd: <u>1</u> _____</p>	<p>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTION</p> <p>Adopted: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p>For: <u>7</u> _____</p> <p>Against: <u>0</u> _____</p> <p>Abstain: <u>0</u> _____</p> <p>Abs/Excd: <u>0</u> _____</p>
<p>TO: HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE LA CROSSE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS</p>			

RE: LA CROSSE COUNTY SUPPORT OF UNIVERSAL HEALTHCARE

WHEREAS, despite gains made since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, the number of Americans without health insurance remains nearly 30 million¹, with another 40 million Americans being under-insured to the degree that they cannot afford to see a doctor or seek preventive medical care; and

WHEREAS, the high and rising costs of health care harm the economy and hit home here in La Crosse County, adding uncontrollable expenses to the small businesses that make our community thrive, and our county government that is on the frontline of providing critical behavioral health services to the uninsured population; and

WHEREAS, research has long shown that the current private provider-based system in the United States is fraught with inefficiencies, with significantly higher administrative costs than other developed countries that use single payer systems²; and

WHEREAS, the coronavirus pandemic has exposed gaps in America’s healthcare system and has made reform all the more urgent, with an estimated 5.7 million Americans at high risk for severe COVID-19 being uninsured and large numbers of Americans losing their employer-based coverage³ due to the pandemic-caused economic downturn; and

WHEREAS, the disparities fueling current racial unrest and protests extend to health insurance coverage⁴ and outcomes, where about half of the approximately 30 million uninsured Americans are people of color and where African American moms die from childbirth related causes at triple the rates of white moms (42.8 per 100,000 versus 13 per 100,000); and

WHEREAS, the insured status of low-income earners is especially fragile, where here in Wisconsin, which has refused federal Medicaid expansion dollars, the steepest declines in ACA Marketplace enrollment between 2015 and 2020 was among the lowest of income groups⁵; and

WHEREAS, there is a recognized need for a healthcare system that would provide national health insurance for every person in the United States for all necessary medical care including prescription drugs, hospital surgical and outpatient services, primary and preventive care, emergency services, reproductive care, dental and vision care and long-term care; and

WHEREAS, a universal healthcare system could provide coverage without copays, deductibles or other out-of-pocket costs, and would reduce bureaucracy, protect the doctor-patient relationship and assure patients a free choice of doctors; and

WHEREAS, studies have found that the U.S. could save up to \$500 billion annually in billing and administrative costs by moving to a universal healthcare system, money that could be used to greatly expand preventive and primary care leading to additional savings in emergency room care and hospital visits; and

WHEREAS, a universal healthcare system would end the burden on local employers to provide health insurance, unleashing resources to invest in innovation and business growth, increasing international competitiveness and freeing up entrepreneurs to pursue their business ideas without fear of risking the loss of health insurance; and

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WHEREAS, by guaranteeing universal health coverage for every person, would better position the United States to defeat COVID-19 and potential future pandemics, provide stability in health care coverage during future economic downturns and close the racial disparities gap related to health insurance; and

WHEREAS, a universal healthcare system would benefit La Crosse County Government fiscally by reducing expenses in providing employee health care and by increasing reimbursements for behavioral health and other County-provided services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors supports universal healthcare and calls on our federal legislators to work toward its immediate creation and implementation, assuring appropriate and efficient health care for all residents of the United States.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin, U.S. Senator Ron Johnson and Congressman Ron Kind.

FISCAL NOTE: La Crosse County spends approximately \$13.2 million annually to provide health insurance for its employees and has approximately \$3.3 million annually in unreimbursed behavioral health service costs due to individuals who either lack insurance, whose insurance provider denies payment, or whose insurance does not fully reimburse the cost.

Date: July 7, 2020
Christine L. Szymanski
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES BOARD CHAIR

Date: July 8, 2020
Romina L. Kruse
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR

Alice K. Spenson
RECORDING CLERK

Jerrid J. Pavlic
RECORDING CLERK

Table with 4 columns: Reviewed Only, Recommended, Not Recommended, and Requested By/Date Requested/Drafted By. Rows include Co. Admin., Fin. Director, Corp. Counsel, and Board Chair.

Adopted by the La Crosse County Board this _____ Day of _____, 2020

1 In Wisconsin, 309,300 individuals were still uninsured as of 2018, with children under the age of 19 making up about 17% of that number.

2 Administrative costs make up about 34% of total health care expenditures in the United States. The U.S. spends nearly five times more per person on health care administration than Canada. The U.S. administrative costs came out to \$812 billion in 2017, or \$2,497 per person in the U.S. compared with \$551 per person in Canada.

3 Employer-based health coverage is the largest source of health coverage for the nonelderly, covering 58% of this population in 2018. As April 22, 2020, twenty-six million Americans had filed for unemployment.

4 In Wisconsin, 4.6% of whites, 7.8% of African Americans, 16% of Hispanic or Latino, and 18.6% of American Indians remained uninsured as of 2018.

5 ACA Marketplace enrollments between 2015 and 2020 declined by 31% (19,945) and 25% (12,971) among the lowest two income groups, while enrollments increased for almost all other income groups.