

Proposed: 2/22/2022

RESOLUTION NO. 19-2022, *First Reading*

By Mayor Seren, Council President Hart,  
Vice President Cobb, and Council Members  
Russell, Moore, Mattox, and Cuda

A Resolution in support of the Medicare for All Act of 2021 (HR 1976); and declaring that universal access to quality healthcare is a human right.

WHEREAS, nearly 7% of Cleveland Heights residents, over 3,000 people, have no health insurance; and

WHEREAS, over 20% of Cleveland Heights residents, approximately 9,000 people, live below the poverty threshold; and

WHEREAS, average life expectancy varies widely, as much as 14 years, among different neighborhoods of Cleveland Heights, geographically correlated with race and income levels; and

WHEREAS, every person in Cleveland Heights deserves high quality health care and everyone's health is at risk when our neighbors cannot receive care; and

WHEREAS, the number of Americans without health insurance before the COVID-19 pandemic was nearly 30 million, with more than 40 million Americans underinsured, despite important gains made since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act; and

WHEREAS, the current COVID-19 pandemic has led to record levels of unemployment, loss of employer-sponsored health insurance, a severely strained health care system, widespread illness, and taken a profound toll on our community's mental health, all of which is placing significant demands on our health care system with the impacts most severe on our Black and brown neighbors; and

WHEREAS, many people delay seeking needed health care due to an inability to pay, leading to a sicker and poorer population in the long run; and

WHEREAS, such a population is significantly more likely to develop serious illness if exposed to COVID-19 and will subsequently face higher mortality rates from the disease; and

WHEREAS, without new strategies, the never-ending rising costs of health care will continue to challenge our already strained municipal budget and the small businesses that keep our community unique and thriving; and

WHEREAS in order to equitably and effectively address the health care burden of the COVID-19 crisis, we must urge the United States Congress to expand health insurance coverage

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to provide comprehensive coverage to every resident of the United States without cost sharing requirements; and

WHEREAS the Medicare for All Act of 2021 would provide national health insurance for every person in the United States for all necessary medical care including diagnostic (e.g., virus) testing; 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 the Medicare for All Act of 2021 would 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, recent polls show that a growing majority of Americans support Medicare for All; and

WHEREAS the Medicare for All Act of 2021 will guarantee that all residents of Cleveland Heights will be fully covered for health care without copays, deductibles or other out-of-pocket costs, and would save millions in taxpayer dollars now spent on premiums that provide often inadequate health insurance coverage; and

WHEREAS, the failure to provide affordable and appropriate preventative health care services places unnecessary and more costly demands upon Cleveland Heights emergency health care services.

WHEREAS, the quality of life for the residents of Cleveland Heights will vastly improve because everyone would be able to get preventative and ongoing care, when they need it to keep themselves and their neighbors healthy and avoid further burdening local resources;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Cleveland Heights, OH, that:

SECTION 1. The Council and Mayor of the City of Cleveland Heights urge Congress to enact emergency legislation to provide universal, comprehensive health coverage with no cost-sharing requirements for patients during the healthcare crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, enthusiastically support the Medicare for All Act of 2021 (H.R. 1976), and call on our federal legislators to work toward its immediate enactment, assuring appropriate and efficient healthcare for all residents of the United States.

SECTION 2. The Council and Mayor of the City of Cleveland Heights hereby declare that universal access to high quality healthcare is a human right and the responsibility of a modern society with the capacity to provide it.

SECTION 3. Upon passage of this Resolution, the Clerk of Council shall provide a copy of this Resolution to the Congressional Delegation representing the City of Cleveland Heights.

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SECTION 4. Notice of the passage of this Resolution shall be given by publishing the title and abstract of its contents, prepared by the Director of Law, once in one newspaper of general circulation in the City of Cleveland Heights.

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MELODY JOY HART  
President of Council

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AMY HIMMELEIN  
Clerk of Council

PASSED:

Presented to Mayor: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

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KAHLIL SEREN  
Mayor