



Wilma Chan, SUPERVISOR, THIRD DISTRICT

ALAMEDA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEES:
Health, Chair
Personnel & Legislative
Unincorporated Services

November 30, 2016

Honorable Board of Supervisors
Alameda County Administration Building
1221 Oak Street
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Board Members:

SUBJECT: Adopt a Resolution Opposing the Repeal of the Affordable Care Act

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors adopt a resolution opposing the repeal of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), commonly called the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or Obamacare; urging the Executive and Legislative branches of the Federal Government to build on the successes of and improve the ACA; urging the Executive and Legislative branches of the Federal Government to acknowledge evidence demonstrating that passage of the Affordable Care Act has resulted in a decrease in overall health care costs and increased the solvency of the Medicare trust fund; and directing County personnel to seek all opportunities to work with Federal, State, County and local leaders representing California residents to fight against the repeal of the ACA and other regressive policy proposals by the Executive and Legislative branches of the Federal Government to reduce funding for Medicaid and Medicare.

DISCUSSION/SUMMARY:

The Affordable Care Act was intended to increase health insurance quality and affordability, lower the uninsured rate by expanding insurance coverage and reduce the costs of healthcare. It introduced mechanisms including mandates, subsidies and insurance exchanges. The law requires insurers to accept all applicants, cover a specific list of conditions and charge the same rates regardless of pre-existing conditions or sex. In 2011, the Congressional Budget Office projected that the ACA would lower future deficits and Medicare spending.

The implementation of the ACA by the State of California and Alameda County have been enormously successful in increasing access to quality health care for State and County residents by helping them gain health insurance. Evidence for this success is provided by the recent Census Bureau report which documented over 3 million Californians gained health insurance during the ACA's 2013, 2014 and 2015 open enrollment periods, and the 102,071 Alameda County residents currently enrolled as Medicaid Coverage Expansion (MCE) members in Alameda County's two Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans—Alameda Alliance for Health and Anthem Blue Cross.

Moreover, there are approximately 321,000 Alameda County residents enrolled in these Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans, and, as of March 2016, over 64,000 Alameda County residents had enrolled in health insurance plans through the Covered California exchange. The State and Alameda County are currently overseeing the

2016 open enrollment period, and the ACA continues to assist Alameda County in providing health care to County residents to this day.

The increased access to higher quality health insurance the ACA has provided for Californians and Alameda County residents has become a crucial element in helping Alameda County health providers receive more consistent and fair compensations.

Despite these successes, the ACA and its implementation faced challenges in Congress and federal courts, and from some state governments, conservative advocacy groups, and small business organizations. The United States Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the ACA's individual mandate as an exercise of Congress's taxing power, that states cannot be forced to participate in the ACA's Medicaid expansion, and that the law's subsidies to help individuals pay for health insurance are available in all states, not just in those that have set up state exchanges.

Multiple leaders taking control of the Executive and Legislative branches of the Federal government in 2017 have stated their desire to quickly repeal the Affordable Care Act even though they have not established replacement policies to ensure that over 20 million Americans who have gained health insurance through ACA-subsidized programs maintain their access to care.

Repeal of the Affordable Care Act, especially without any replacement policies in place, would eliminate vital federal subsidies that help maintain a number of State and County healthcare programs and services, support the financial viability of our local hospitals and emergency services, and ensure access to healthcare for many of the County's residents, including those with pre-existing conditions. A loss of Medi-Cal funding would limit the ability of Alameda County's health system, local hospitals, community health clinics, and other community health care providers to serve their entire patient population.

This Board Resolution opposes any attempts by the Executive and Legislative branches of the Federal Government in 2017 to repeal the Affordable Care Act, and directs County personnel to seek all opportunities to work with Federal, State, County and local leaders representing California residents to fight against the repeal of the ACA and further regressive policy proposals by leaders of the Executive and Legislative branches of the Federal Government to reduce funding for Medicaid and Medicare.

The Board Resolution was reviewed and recommended for full Board approval by the Personnel/Administration/Legislation (PAL) Committee at its November 28, 2016 meeting.

FINANCING:

There is no fiscal impact to this resolution at this time.

Respectfully,



Wilma Chan

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF ALAMEDA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

RESOLUTION NUMBER 2016- 370

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE REPEAL OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

WHEREAS, the implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (“ACA”) by the State of California and Alameda County has been enormously successful in increasing access to quality health care for State and County residents by helping them obtain health insurance;¹ and

WHEREAS, evidence for this success is provided by the recent Census Bureau report which documented that over 3 million Californians² had gained health insurance during the ACA’s 2013, 2014 and 2015 open enrollment periods, and the 102,071 Alameda County residents currently enrolled as Medicaid Coverage Expansion (MCE) members in Alameda County’s two Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans—79,000 with Alameda Alliance for Health and 23,071 with Anthem Blue Cross; and

WHEREAS, the diversity of the Medicaid Coverage Expansion (MCE) enrollees in Alameda County—approximately 20 percent Black; 18 percent Hispanic, 16 percent White, 12 percent Chinese; eight percent Asian/Pacific Islander; four percent Vietnamese; four percent Filipino, and three percent Asian Indian—reflects the overall racial and ethnic diversity of Alameda County; and

WHEREAS, Alameda County’s eight Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) have 41,624—or 40 percent—of the newly eligible Medi-Cal beneficiaries in Alameda County assigned to them as their medical home, including both Alameda Alliance for Health and Anthem Blue Cross Members, and project they will receive 128,000 visits by these Medi-Cal beneficiaries in 2016 for medical, dental, behavioral health, and optical visits; and

WHEREAS, there are a total of 443,365 Medi-Cal enrollees in Alameda County as of January 2016 comprising more than one-quarter of the County’s population.³

WHEREAS, approximately 321,000 Alameda County residents are enrolled in the County’s Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans,⁴ and, as of March 2016, over 64,000 Alameda County residents have enrolled in health insurance plans through the Covered California exchange; and

WHEREAS, the State and Alameda County are currently overseeing the 2016 open enrollment period, and the ACA continues to assist Alameda County in providing health care to its residents to this day; and

WHEREAS, the public and private providers of health care to Alameda County residents must be fairly compensated for their services, and the increased access to higher quality health insurance that the ACA has provided for Californians and Alameda County residents has become a crucial element in helping Alameda County health providers receive more consistent and fair compensation; and

WHEREAS, a loss of Medi-Cal funding for Alameda County’s community health centers’ MCE patients would not only limit their ability to serve 42,000 MCE enrollees, but also undermine their ability to serve their entire patient population of over 190,000 Alameda County

¹ *California’s Future: Health Care*, by Shannon McConville, Public Policy Institute of California, January 2016. http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_116SMR.pdf.

² *The 2016-17 Budget: Analysis of the Medi-Cal Budget*, by Mac Taylor, California’s Legislative Analyst’s Office, February 2016, <http://www.lao.ca.gov/reports/2016/3350/medi-cal-budget-analysis-021116.pdf>.

³ “Fact Sheet: Medi-Cal Reaches Millions of People Across California, but Faces an Uncertain Future,” by Scott Graves, California Budget & Policy Center, November 2016. <http://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/medi-cal-reaches-millions-people-across-california-faces-uncertain-future/>.

⁴ “Medi-Cal Managed Care Enrollment Report – October 2016.” California Department of Health Care Services. http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/dataandstats/reports/Documents/MMCD_Enrollment_Reports/MMCENrollRptOct2016.pdf.

residents—the majority of whom live in Oakland, Hayward, San Leandro, Fremont, and Berkeley;⁵ and

WHEREAS, four Emergency Rooms in Alameda County and other desperately needed services have been under major threat of closure in the last decade, and the State and Alameda County’s ACA implementations have been crucial in preserving many of these services; and

WHEREAS, multiple leaders taking control of the Executive and Legislative branches of the Federal Government in 2017 have stated their desire to quickly repeal the ACA even though they have not established replacement policies to ensure that over 20 million Americans who have gained health insurance through ACA-subsidized programs maintain their access to care;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF ALAMEDA COUNTY, urges the Executive and Legislative branches of the Federal Government to build on the many successes of the Affordable Care Act and to work to improve the ACA instead of repealing it; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF ALAMEDA COUNTY urges the Executive and Legislative branches of the Federal Government to acknowledge reports from multiple agencies of the Federal Government which have factually proven that year-to-year rises in the overall cost of health care in the United States decreased in the years following the passage and major implementations of the ACA, and that solvency for the Medicare trust fund has substantially increased since the passage and major implementations of the ACA; and

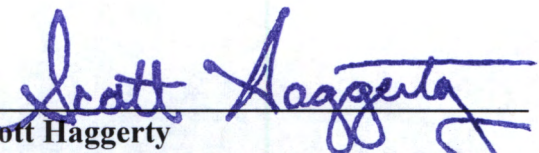
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF ALAMEDA COUNTY will direct Alameda County personnel to seek all opportunities to work with Federal, State, County and local leaders representing California residents to fight against the repeal of the Affordable Care Act and further regressive policy proposals by leaders of the Executive and Legislative branches of the Federal Government to reduce funding for Medicaid and Medicare in the proposed implementations of block grants, privatization schemes, and other methods.

THE FOREGOING was PASSED and ADOPTED by a majority vote of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors this 6th day of December 2016, by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors Carson, Chan, Miley & Valle

NOES: None

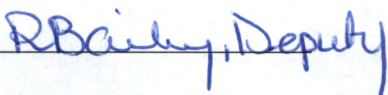
EXCUSED: President Haggerty

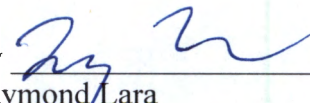


Scott Haggerty
PRESIDENT, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Attest:
Clerk, Board of Supervisors

Approved as to Form:
Donna R. Ziegler
County Counsel

By  Deputy

By 

Raymond Lara
Senior Deputy County Counsel

⁵ “Fact Sheet: Community Health Centers at a Glance – 2015,” by the Alameda Health Consortium.