

No. R-227. Joint house resolution urging Congress to enact H.R. 676, the National Health Insurance Act (or the Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act).

(J.R.H.27)

Offered by: Representatives Haas of Rochester, Obuchowski of Rockingham, McFaun of Barre Town, Ancel of Calais, Andrews of Rutland City, Aswad of Burlington, Bissonnette of Winooski, Bohi of Hartford, Botzow of Pownal, Bray of New Haven, Browning of Arlington, Burke of Brattleboro, Cheney of Norwich, Clarkson of Woodstock, Conquest of Newbury, Copeland-Hanzas of Bradford, Courcelle of Rutland City, Davis of Washington, Deen of Westminster, Donovan of Burlington, Edwards of Brattleboro, Emmons of Springfield, Evans of Essex, Fisher of Lincoln, Frank of Underhill, French of Shrewsbury, French of Randolph, Geier of South Burlington, Gilbert of Fairfax, Grad of Moretown, Head of South Burlington, Heath of Westford, Hooper of Montpelier, Howard of Rutland City, Jerman of Essex, Jewett of Ripton, Johnson of South Hero, Keenan of St. Albans City, Kitzmiller of Montpelier, Klein of East Montpelier, Lanpher of Vergennes, Larson of Burlington, Lenex of Shelburne, Leriche of Hardwick, Lippert of Hinesburg, Lorber of Burlington, Macaig of Williston, Malcolm of Pawlet, Manwaring of Wilmington, Marek of Newfane, Martin of Springfield, Martin of Wolcott, Masland of Thetford, McCullough of Williston, Milkey of Brattleboro, Miller of Shaftsbury, Minter of Waterbury, Mitchell of Barnard, Moran of Wardsboro, Mrowicki of Putney, Nease of Johnson, Nuovo of Middlebury, O'Donnell of Vernon, Orr of Charlotte, Partridge of Windham, Pellett of Chester, Peltz of Woodbury, Poirier of Barre City, Potter of Clarendon, Pugh of South Burlington, Ram of Burlington, Rodgers of Glover, Shand of Weathersfield, Sharpe of Bristol, Smith of Mendon, Spengler of Colchester, Stevens of Waterbury, Stevens of Shoreham, Sweaney of Windsor, Taylor of Barre City, Webb of Shelburne, Weston of Burlington, Wheeler of Derby, Wilson of Manchester, Wizowaty of Burlington, Zenie of Colchester and Zuckerman of Burlington

Whereas, every person in Vermont and the United States deserves access to affordable, quality health care, and

Whereas, there is a growing crisis in health care in the United States of America, manifested in rising health care costs, increased premiums, increased out-of-pocket spending, and decreased international business competitiveness, and

Whereas, over 47,000 Vermonters still lack health insurance coverage, and

Whereas, public and private health care costs in Vermont have risen from \$2.2 billion in 2002 to \$4.2 billion in 2007, a greater percentage increase than the increase in national health care spending during the same time period, and

Whereas, these greatly increased costs have resulted in higher school and municipal budgets, which increase the property tax burden placed on all Vermonters, and

Whereas, the establishment of new small businesses can be a major force contributing to an improved Vermont economy, and health care concerns should not be a barrier to this important economic stimulus, and

Whereas, many individuals are dissuaded from establishing their own business enterprises because they fear that leaving their current jobs will mean a loss of health insurance coverage, and

Whereas, those insured are all too often underinsured, and

Whereas, one-half of all personal bankruptcies are due to illnesses or medical bills, and

Whereas, the increasing expense of Medicaid and the rising costs of insuring public sector employees can best be met by creating a national publicly funded health insurance program, and

Whereas, the complex bureaucracy arising from our fragmented, for-profit, multipayer system of health care financing has overhead expenses of nearly 30 percent, while Medicare operates with an overhead of only three percent, and

Whereas, Vermont’s ability to step forward on universal health care depends on action at the federal level, and

Whereas, U.S. Representative John Conyers, Jr. has introduced H.R. 676, the United States National Health Insurance Act (or the Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act), and

Whereas, this act would provide a universal and comprehensive system of high-quality national health insurance, and

Whereas, in the Senate, U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders has introduced S. 703, the American Health Security Act of 2009 that “establishes a state-based American Health Security Program to provide every U.S. resident who is a U.S. citizen, national, or lawful resident alien with health care services,” and “requires each participating state to establish a state health security program,” and

Whereas, S. 703 would create a system of comprehensive health care hospital services, professional services (including patient education training in self-management), community-based primary health services, long-term, acute, and chronic care services, prescription drugs, biologicals, insulin, and medical foods, dental services, mental health and substance abuse treatment services, diagnostic tests, and other services, including outpatient therapy, durable medical equipment, home dialysis, ambulance service, prosthetic devices, and addition items and services, and

Whereas, these new state health security programs would replace Medicare, Medicaid, SCHIP, and other existing federal health care programs, be funded through new federal health care income and payroll taxes, and be exempt from the limitations on state health care programs under ERISA, and

Whereas, individual state health care security programs could be tailored to the specific needs of an individual state while minimum national standards would be maintained through the newly established American Health Care Security Standards Board, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly urges Congress to enact H.R. 676, the United States National Health Insurance Act (or the Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act) or, in the alternative, S. 703, the American Health Care Security Act of 2009, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the members of the Vermont Congressional Delegation.