

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA URGING IMMEDIATE PASSAGE OF COMPREHENSIVE FEDERAL HEALTH REFORM LEGISLATION

Resolution No. _____

WHEREAS, experts from across the political spectrum agree that America’s health system is “broken” and unsustainable in its present configuration; and

WHEREAS, fourteen percent of the population within the County of Santa Barbara is considered uninsured and 14 percent of children age 0-18 do not have insurance; and,

WHEREAS, nearly 38,000 children were insured through Medi-Cal and 9,000 children were insured through Healthy Families in 2007; and,

WHEREAS, additional families also experience the challenge of maintaining health insurance coverage confronting the high cost of health care that threatens their financial stability, leaves them exposed to higher premiums and deductibles, and puts them at risk for a possible loss of health insurance; and;

WHEREAS, employer-sponsored health insurance premiums have nearly doubled in recent years making it increasingly difficult for employers, including county governments, to provide health insurance coverage for their employees and retirees; and

WHEREAS, millions of Americans do not have health coverage, or have inadequate coverage and as our economic challenges multiply, the problem of health care access grows, further straining counties’ capacity to provide care for the uninsured, underinsured and medically indigent; and

WHEREAS, county officials are elected to protect the health and welfare of their constituents: and

WHEREAS, the County of Santa Barbara provides various mental health services to between 2,000-3,000 indigent clients a year at an annual cost of four to five million dollars; provides specialty services such as obstetrics/gynecology, orthopedic, infectious disease, surgery, arthritis, diabetes, and dermatology through its primary care and urgent care clinics to approximately 20,500 patients per year at an annual cost of approximately \$16 million; and currently spends four million dollars to provide health care services to jail inmates; and,

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties (NACo) Health System Reform Working Group, appointed by President Don Stapley in July 2008 and chaired by President-Elect Valerie Brown, has held three regional hearings to explore the health crisis and to hear what county officials believe should be done about it and has summarized its findings in Restoring the Partnership for American Health: Counties in a 21st Century Health System which was approved and adopted by resolution of the NACo Health Steering Committee and Board of Directors on March 9, 2009.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara endorses NACo's health reform principles, as summarized in Restoring the Partnership for American Health: Counties in a 21st Century Health System; namely, that reform legislation should

1. restore the partnership between county and federal governments;
2. provide access to affordable, quality health care to all;
3. invest in public health, including health promotion and disease and injury prevention;
4. stabilize and strengthen the local health care safety net system, especially Medicaid and disproportional share hospital (DSH) payments;
5. invest in the development of the health professional and paraprofessional workforce;
6. ensure that county health agencies have the resources to meaningfully use health information technology;
7. enable elderly and disabled persons to receive the services they need in the least restrictive environment; and
8. reform the delivery and financing of health services in the jail system.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors strongly urges the 111th Congress of the United States to enact comprehensive health reform legislation without delay before the end of its first session.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara, State of California this 1st of September, 2009, by the following vote:

- AYES:
- NOES:
- ABSENT:
- ABSTAIN:

Chair, Board of Supervisors

County of Santa Barbara

ATTEST:

MICHAEL F. BROWN
CLERK OF THE BOARD

By _____

Deputy Clerk

Approved as to Form:

DENNIS MARSHALL
COUNTY COUNSEL

By: _____

Rachel Van Mullem
Deputy County Counsel