
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 334 Session of
2007

INTRODUCED BY BIANCUCCI, DeLUCA, EACHUS, DeWEESE, McCALL, BELFANTI, BENNINGTON, BRENNAN, CALTAGIRONE, CARROLL, CASORIO, CONKLIN, DePASQUALE, FAIRCHILD, FREEMAN, GALLOWAY, GEORGE, GIBBONS, GOODMAN, GRUCELA, HALUSKA, HANNA, HARHAI, HARKINS, HENNESSEY, HORNAMAN, JAMES, KESSLER, KING, KORTZ, KULA, LENTZ, LONGIETTI, MAHONEY, McILVAINE SMITH, M. O'BRIEN, PALLONE, PASHINSKI, PAYTON, PETRARCA, SANTONI, SAYLOR, SEIP, SHIMKUS, SIPTROTH, K. SMITH, M. SMITH, STURLA, R. TAYLOR, WALKO, WANSACZ, WHEATLEY, J. WHITE, WOJNAROSKI, YOUNGBLOOD AND YUDICHAK, JUNE 14, 2007

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON INSURANCE, JUNE 14, 2007

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 Directing the appointment of a task force to study affordable
2 health care insurance, health care access and quality health
3 care services for the citizens of this Commonwealth.

4 WHEREAS, Health care costs have been increasing twice as fast
5 as average wages in this Commonwealth; and

6 WHEREAS, Approximately 767,000 Pennsylvanians remain
7 uninsured; and

8 WHEREAS, The large number of uninsured workers has a negative
9 impact on the economy and productivity in this Commonwealth
10 because insured workers are healthier and use fewer sick days;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Governor Edward G. Rendell has proposed an ambitious
13 and laudable plan to provide health insurance for every
14 Pennsylvanian; and

1 WHEREAS, While the health care crisis is a national concern,
2 solutions addressing three fundamental issues--affordability,
3 accessibility and quality--can drive down health care costs and
4 improve the well-being of citizens in this Commonwealth; and

5 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth has a clear interest in ensuring
6 that families and small employers in this Commonwealth can
7 afford health insurance because the cost of uninsured
8 Pennsylvanians drives up the cost of health care for all insured
9 citizens; and

10 WHEREAS, An estimated 6.5% of insurance premiums reflect the
11 more than \$1 billion required each year to offset the health
12 care charges for the uninsured; and

13 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth must contain health care coverage
14 premium increases for small employers, ensure the availability
15 of affordable health care coverage for workers who lose health
16 care benefits and the use of a substantial portion of premiums
17 for small employers to pay medical claims and require
18 justification for premium increases; and

19 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania's health care market should be as
20 transparent as possible so all consumers can make well-informed
21 decisions in determining their health care choices and needs;
22 and

23 WHEREAS, In order for the Commonwealth to expand access to
24 quality health care, all health care professionals need to be
25 able to practice to the fullest extent of their education,
26 training and skills while maintaining the highest level of
27 patient safety in the delivery of health care services; and

28 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth is paying billions of dollars each
29 year in avoidable health care costs; and

30 WHEREAS, Hospitals and health care providers need to focus on

1 medical errors that drive up health care costs and increase the
2 risk of negative outcomes or extended stays in hospitals; and

3 WHEREAS, The charges for uncompensated care for uninsured
4 persons, additional days of hospital care due to potentially
5 avoidable hospital-acquired infections, medical errors,
6 readmissions for complications or infections and avoidable
7 hospitalizations due to inadequate care of patients with chronic
8 diseases total \$7.6 billion per year; therefore be it

9 RESOLVED, (the Senate concurring), That the General Assembly
10 establish a task force to study affordable health care
11 insurance, health care access and quality health care services
12 for the citizens of this Commonwealth; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the task force shall explore all potential
14 funding sources so that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania can
15 guarantee health insurance coverage for all of its residents;
16 and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the task force be comprised of the following
18 members:

19 (1) The chairman and minority chairman of the Public
20 Health and Welfare Committee of the Senate.

21 (2) The chairman and minority chairman of the Health and
22 Human Services Committee of the House of Representatives.

23 (3) The chairman and minority chairman of the Banking
24 and Insurance Committee of the Senate.

25 (4) The chairman and minority chairman of the Insurance
26 Committee of the House of Representatives.

27 (5) The chairman and minority chairman of the Consumer
28 Protection and Professional Licensure Committee of the
29 Senate.

30 (6) The chairman and minority chairman of the

1 Professional Licensure Committee of the House of
2 Representatives.

3 (7) The director of the Governor's Office of Health Care
4 Reform or a designee.

5 (8) The Insurance Commissioner or a designee.

6 (9) The Secretary of Health or a designee.

7 (10) One member appointed by the President pro tempore
8 of the Senate.

9 (11) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the
10 Senate.

11 (12) One member appointed by the Speaker of the House of
12 Representatives.

13 (13) One member appointed by the Majority Leader of the
14 House of Representatives.

15 (14) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the
16 House of Representatives.

17 (15) Five members appointed by the Governor to include:

18 (i) A representative of hospitals or health systems.

19 (ii) A physician.

20 (iii) A representative of the health insurance
21 industry.

22 (iv) A representative of organized labor
23 representing licensed health care professionals.

24 (v) A representative of small business;

25 and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That task force members be appointed within 30 days
27 of the adoption of this resolution; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That within 15 days of the respective task force
29 appointments, the director of the Governor's Office of Health
30 Care Reform call the initial meeting of the task force, and at

1 such meeting the members elect a chairperson; and be it further
2 RESOLVED, That the task force be authorized to hold hearings,
3 take testimony and make investigations at such places as it
4 deems necessary in this Commonwealth; and be it further
5 RESOLVED, That each member of the task force have power to
6 administer oaths and affirmations to witnesses appearing before
7 the task force; and be it further
8 RESOLVED, That by December 31, 2007, the task force report to
9 the General Assembly on its activities and findings and make
10 recommendations; and be it further
11 RESOLVED, That expenses incurred by the task force in
12 carrying out its responsibilities, including per diem and travel
13 expenses incurred by members and regular staff, stenographic
14 charges and other incidental expenses, be paid from appropriate
15 accounts under the control of the Chief Clerk of the Senate and
16 the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives, one-half of the
17 expenses of the members to be paid by the Senate and one-half of
18 the expenses to be paid by the House of Representatives; and be
19 it further
20 RESOLVED, That within 30 days after the task force has made
21 its report, the chairperson cause a record of all expenses
22 incurred by the members of the task force, which are payable at
23 Commonwealth expense, to be filed with the Chief Clerk of the
24 Senate and the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives.