

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, YUDICHAK, KIRKLAND, SOLOBAY, FABRIZIO, READSHAW AND SURRA, JUNE 14, 2007

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON INSURANCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, JUNE 18, 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

1 Pennsylvanian; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 WHEREAS, Hospitals and health care providers need to focus on
2 medical errors that drive up health care costs and increase the
3 risk of negative outcomes or extended stays in hospitals; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 (6) The chairman and minority chairman of the
2 Professional Licensure Committee of the House of
3 Representatives.

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

6 (8) The Insurance Commissioner or a designee.

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

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

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

12 ~~(12) One member appointed by the Speaker of the House of~~ <—
13 ~~Representatives.~~

14 ~~(13)~~ (12) One member appointed by the Majority Leader of <—
15 the House of Representatives.

16 ~~(14)~~ (13) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of <—
17 the House of Representatives.

18 ~~(15)~~ (14) Five members appointed by the Governor to <—
19 include:

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

21 (ii) A physician.

22 (iii) A representative of the health insurance
23 industry.

24 (iv) A representative of organized labor
25 representing licensed health care professionals.

26 (v) A representative of small business;

27 and be it further

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

30 RESOLVED, That within 15 days of the respective task force

1 appointments, the director of the Governor's Office of Health
2 Care Reform call the initial meeting of the task force, and at
3 such meeting the members elect a chairperson; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That the task force be authorized to hold hearings,
5 take testimony and make investigations at such places as it
6 deems necessary in this Commonwealth; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That each member of the task force have power to
8 administer oaths and affirmations to witnesses appearing before
9 the task force; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That ~~by December 31, 2007~~ WITHIN 120 DAYS OF
11 ADOPTION OF THIS RESOLUTION, the task force report to the
12 General Assembly on its activities and findings and make
13 recommendations; and be it further

<—

14 RESOLVED, That expenses incurred by the task force in
15 carrying out its responsibilities, including per diem and travel
16 expenses incurred by members and regular staff, stenographic
17 charges and other incidental expenses, be paid from appropriate
18 accounts under the control of the Chief Clerk of the Senate and
19 the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives, one-half of the
20 expenses of the members to be paid by the Senate and one-half of
21 the expenses to be paid by the House of Representatives; and be
22 it further

23 RESOLVED, That within 30 days after the task force has made
24 its report, the chairperson cause a record of all expenses
25 incurred by the members of the task force, which are payable at
26 Commonwealth expense, to be filed with the Chief Clerk of the
27 Senate and the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives.