ITEM FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

Approval and adoption of Resolution No.5913, establishing City support for H.R. 1384, Medicare for All Act of 2019, and urging its passage by congress.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Action Item __X__; Non-Action Item ___

Approve and adopt Resolution No. 5913.

Sample Motion:

I move to approve and adopt Resolution No. 5913, thereby establishing the City of Carpinteria’s support for H.R. 1384, Medicare for All Act of 2019, and urging its passage by congress.

BACKGROUND

From time-to-time the City Council elects to take positions on state or federal legislation. As a part of each regular agenda, information from the League of California Cities is included in Council agenda materials and the Council has the opportunity to request that any legislative matter be scheduled for consideration as a part of a future Council agenda. Outside of a Council meeting, Councilmembers can individually contact the City Manager to request that a legislative matter be placed on an agenda for discussion and direction.

In June, Councilmembers received information from an advocate of H.R. 1384, Mr. Peter Conn, and individually requested that H.R. 1384, Medicare for All Act of 2019, be included on a future City Council agenda for discussion. At its regular meeting of July 8, 2019, the City Council directed that a matter be scheduled to allow the Council to consider officially supporting and urging passage of the Medicare for All Act of 2019.

The purpose of this agenda matter to allow the Council to approve and adopt a Resolution (attached) in support of the federal bill, H.R. 1384, the Medicare for All Act of
2019. Should the Council adopt the Resolution, it would be transmitted to the bill’s author and Congressman Carbajal and Senator Feinstein.

DISCUSSION

H.R. 1384 is a federal bill. If passed, H.R. 1384 would affect health care in the United States because it would entitle all residents, and certain authorized non-residents, of the United States to free health care.

H.R. 1384: Medicare for All Act of 2019

A. Universal Health Care

Universal health care is a system in which every resident receives quality medical services, regardless of an individual’s ability to pay. As currently proposed, the program would be funded by the federal government.

B. Bill Summary

Under H.R. 1384, every resident of the United States would be entitled to free health care. The bill would also authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to extend benefits to some non-residents. After implementation of the program, all residents would be automatically enrolled at birth or upon establishment of residency. To manage the cost of the program, the Department of Health and Human Services would be required to assemble a health budget.

Coverage includes items and services medically necessary or appropriate to maintenance of health or for the diagnosis, treatment, or rehabilitation of a health condition, such as:

- Emergency, hospital and ambulance services
- Primary and preventative care
- Prescription medications and devices
- Mental health services
- Laboratory services
- Pediatric care
- Reproductive care
- Dental, eye, and ear care
- Long-term services care and support
- Rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices

The proposed bill also includes a process for obtaining coverage for experimental items, services, and drugs. Every person eligible for these benefits would have the freedom to select any provider qualified to participate. Providers qualified to participate must meet minimum service and facility requirements to be eligible.
If H.R. 1384 becomes effective, employers and private health insurers would be prohibited from providing benefits or selling duplicative coverage. States and/or private contractors, however, would still be allowed to offer additional coverage on top of the federal program. The bill also proposes to prohibit deductibles, coinsurance, copayments and other “cost-sharing” which involve the patient making a partial payment for covered services. Instead, if H.R. 1384 were to be adopted, providers would be prohibited from charging covered individuals for any covered service. The bill would also require the Department of Health and Human Services to negotiate prices for prescription drugs.

Although health insurance exchanges and specified federal health programs would terminate upon program implementation, the program would not affect coverage provided through the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Indian Health Service.

C. Arguments in Support

H.R. 1384 is sponsored by Representative Pramila Jayapal and the House Progressive Caucus and is cosponsored by 114 House Democrats. Other supporters include: Democracy for America, National Nurses United, and Healthcare-NOW.

Proponents of H.R. 1384 make the following arguments in support of the bill:

- H.R. 1384 would provide comprehensive, cost-free health insurance coverage for all U.S. residents, regardless of immigration status.
- Costs would be manageable because the government can control all the costs to keep them low.
- H.R. 1384 would explicitly cover reproductive health services, remove federal restrictions on coverage, and provide protection for providers offering reproductive health services.
- H.R. 1384 would establish strong anti-discrimination protections for patients, require providers to act exclusively in their patient’s interest, and include steps to address health inequities and reach underserved populations.

D. Arguments in Opposition

Opponents of H.R. 1384 include: National Right to Life Committee, Partnership for America’s Health Care Future (comprised of pharmaceutical companies, insurance companies, and private hospitals), American Medical Association, PhRMA, America’s Health Insurance Plans and the Federation of American Hospitals, and some moderate Democrats including Rep. Tim Ryan.

Opponents of H.R. 1384 make the following arguments in opposition of the bill:

- H.R. 1384 would place unprecedented strain on the federal budget, estimating an additional $32.6 trillion in federal budget commitments during the first 10 years.
- H.R. 1384 would eliminate privately funded health plans, including employer-sponsored coverage.
Concern that complete reliance on government funded health care would require rationing of services or degradation of quality care when there are insufficient funds (opponents argue that cost-sharing provisions of current private plans, which would be prohibited under H.R. 1384, prevent these effects).

Concern regarding reproductive health protections within the proposed bill, specifically that health providers who are morally opposed to abortion could be required to perform abortions if they provide other kinds of reproductive health care.

H.R. 1384 would erode the provisions that limit the use of federal funds for abortion services.

E. Status

H.R. 1384 was introduced in the House on February 27, 2019 and referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce as well as the Committees on Ways and Mean, Education and Labor, Rules, Oversight and Reform, and Armed Services.

POLICY

Taking positions for or against federal or state legislation is within the purview of the City Council. It is in the City's interest and consistent with its Sustainability Policy (Resolution No. 5500) to take steps, as the City Council determines appropriate, to support the physical and mental health and wellbeing of Carpinteria residents.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no hard costs associated with taking a position on federal or state legislation. Some legislation may have the potential over time to be a financial benefit or detriment to the City.

LEGAL AND RISK MANAGEMENT

The City Attorney's office assisted in the preparation of information included in this report.

OPTIONS

1. Approve and adopt Resolution No. 5913
2. Direct that staff make changes to the draft Resolution.
3. Decline to take a position concerning H.R. 1384.
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ATTACHMENT

Resolution No. 5913

Staff contact: Dave Durflinger, City Manager
(805 755-4400, daved@ci.carpinteria.ca.us

Signature
RESOLUTION NO. 5913

A RESOLUTION OF THE CARPINTERIA CITY COUNCIL
SUPPORTING H.R. 1384, MEDICARE FOR ALL ACT OF 2019, AND URGING
CONGRESS TO SUPPORT AND PASS H.R. 1384.

WHEREAS, the City of Carpinteria has determined that lack of proper health care for residents undermines families, social networks and institutions that are the backbone of the Carpinteria community; and

WHEREAS, the significant cost of health insurance takes millions of dollars out of the local economy, threatens small businesses that make up the majority of Carpinteria’s business community, and requires public agencies such as the City of Carpinteria to expend significant amounts of taxpayer resources on health insurance that could otherwise be put to use providing important services in the community; and,

WHEREAS, the City has historically supported a statewide, state-managed, single payer health care system; and,

WHEREAS, H.R. 1384 would address inequities in the delivery of health care services, expand the types of health care services available and allow for improved management of health care costs.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CARPINTERIA CITY COUNCIL HEREBY RESOLVES THAT the City of Carpinteria endorses H.R. 1384, Medicare for All Act of 2019, and urges Congress to support and pass H.R. 1384.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 12th day of August, 2019 by the following vote:

AYES: COUNCILMEMBER:

NOES: COUNCILMEMBER:

ABSENT: COUNCILMEMBER:

ABSTAIN: COUNCILMEMBER:

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Mayor, City of Carpinteria

City Clerk, City of Carpinteria

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Carpinteria held the 12th day of August, 2019.

[Signature]
City Clerk, City of Carpinteria

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

[Signature]
Peter Brown, on behalf of
Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP
Acting as City Attorney of the City of Carpinteria