

Thomson Village Board Endorses Medicare-for-All

Written by Arthur Donart, Ph.D.

At Monday night's September 11, 2017, Village Board meeting in Thomson, IL, Trustees voted four-to-one to adopt a resolution to support HR 676, "Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act," introduced by Congressman John Coyners, Jr. Trustee Arthur Donart introduced the resolution at the Board's August meeting and then moved to table it, to allow time for researching the issue. He suggested members go online to watch the video [Fix It, Healthcare at the Tipping Point](#).

They were urged to visit congress.gov; click on "Legislation HR676" in the search block; read the 60-page bill.

What motivated Donart was the \$44,000 dollar local budget item, to pay health insurance costs for three, full-time village employees.

"This is tax money out of your pockets to enrich health care CEO's and Big Pharma. They raise their prices, and we have to raise our taxes to keep up. This has got to stop! Congress can fix this."

He explained that Congress makes the rules. The Health Care lobby spends big, to elect the rule makers, to make rules favorable to their profit goals. What they spend on lobbyists and contributions to politicians *comes out of our pockets* in the form of higher health care costs.

Donart contacted the Illinois Office of Management and Budget on Tuesday, September 12. They were unaware of HR676! He learned the State pays \$2.8 billion for employee health insurance. Medicaid costs for the poor run the State an additional \$14 billion. State Senate Bill 6 appropriated \$36.5 billion for FY2018, to cover the State's total budget costs.

Donart had contacted Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner about the issue. The Governor's assistant told him the State has some 60,000 employees with paid health insurance. Donart reasoned that if the State is paying at the same rate as the village, that's costing Illinois \$880 million dollars a year. Add to that the cost of retirees' Medi-gap policies and the State's share for Medicare and the cost becomes enormous! Rauner's assistant said he would discuss the issue with the Governor that afternoon.

Having served as a former Superintendent of Schools, Donart also mentioned the cost to school districts. He noted HR 676 would mean more money for education.

HR 676 has 117 co-sponsors. Illinois co-sponsors are Congresswoman Janice Schakowsky, IL 9th; Congresswoman Robin L. Kelly, IL 2nd; Congressman Luis Gutierrez, IL 4th; Congressman

Danny Davis, IL 7th; Congressman Bobby Rush, IL 1st. In Iowa, Congressman David Loebsack is a co-sponsor.

The text of the resolution adopted is as follows:

"Resolution Supporting Medicare for All,

WHEREAS health care costs have risen faster than inflation over the last twenty years; and

WHEREAS Medicare has been the most efficient and cost effective delivery system for elderly health care; and

WHEREAS health care costs have been an increasingly difficult burden for the taxpayers of all units of government, small businesses, and the self- employed; and

WHEREAS the current for-profit health care system consumes 35 cents of every health care dollar on advertising, claims processing, administrative cost, and stockholder dividends; and

WHEREAS the present system is costly, [is] inefficient, and fails to provide care to millions of citizens; and

WHEREAS the Village of Thomson must budget \$44,000 to cover three full-time employees' health care insurance that could be put to better use; and

WHEREAS other municipalities, counties, school districts, and the State of Illinois would save a substantial amount of money if H.R. 676, a Single Payer, Medicare for All legislative bill co-sponsored by 114 members of Congress were to become law;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Thomson Village Board urges Congresswoman Cheri Bustos and U. S. Senators Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth to support Medicare for All. Given this 11th day of September, 2017, by a vote of: 4 Yeas and 1 Nay. [Disclosure: The author is the trustee who introduced this resolution.]

<http://thecity1.com/op-ed/dr-arthur-donart/14756-thomson-village-board-endorses-medicare-for-all.html>

<https://ilsinglepayer.org/article/dr-arthur-donart-thomson-village-board-endorses-medicare-all>

List of cities, counties, and state legislatures that have endorsed HR 676 is here:

<http://unionsforsinglepayer.org/more/>

Further info: Kay Tillow 502 636 1551

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