

**ADVISORY REFERENDUM QUESTION
CREATION OF A SYSTEM OF UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE**

[November 6, 2001, passed 52% to 48%]

DO YOU SUPPORT PASSAGE BY THE PORTLAND CITY COUNCIL OF THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION SUPPORTING CREATION OF A SYSTEM OF UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE?

(This question is an advisory referendum question only the results of which do not bind the Portland City Council.)

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE CREATION OF A SYSTEM OF UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE

WHEREAS, the state has enacted a planning statute to examine the means for implementing a single payer health system: and

WHEREAS, the State Board is currently being constituted and will issue its report and recommendations by March 1, 2002: and

WHEREAS, the prescription drug reforms already enacted by the state of Maine are under legal assault by the pharmaceutical companies: and

WHEREAS, in Maine, the non-profit model for health insurance is quickly disappearing: and

WHEREAS, we know that other developed countries, including our Canadian neighbors, face less than half our costs for health care and live longer lives and have lower infant mortality: and

WHEREAS, we know that the worst health care outcomes in the United States are among the poor and minorities: and

WHEREAS, statistics show that Portland residents appear to suffer from the health care effects associated with economic disadvantage in that:

- (a) Portland has a higher rate of uninsured than nearby towns (13.1% v. 10.3%);
- (b) Portland has a higher rate of adults who have not had a physical exam in the past five years (14% v. 9.5%);
- (c) Portland has a higher rate of adults who say that costs prevented a visit to the doctor in the past year (10.4% v. 7.2%); and
- (d) Portland has a higher rate of adults who do not have a dentist (32% v. 22%): and

WHEREAS, the lack of a system of universal health care results in increased illness, as well as substantial financial burden on the people of Portland,

NOW BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that it is the policy of the city of Portland that health care is an essential safeguard of human life and dignity and that there is an obligation for society to ensure that every person be able to realize that right, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a system of universal health care would provide all residents with comprehensive health care coverage (including the freedom to choose doctors and other health care professionals) and eliminate the role of insurance companies in health care, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the city shall take all appropriate steps to encourage establishment of such a system by the state and federal governments; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in furtherance of this policy, the Director of the City's Health and Human Services Department shall annually, on or before July 1st of each year, publish and present to the City Council a report concerning the benefits of the enactment of such a system of universal health care and that such annual report will at a minimum include:

- (1) a survey of pending proposals for such a system of universal health care;
- (2) a survey of pending legislation (state or federal) for such a system of universal health care; and
- (3) the Director's assessment of the benefits to the city of Portland of adoption of such a system, including the probable effects on the city's budget and the health of its residents.