



***RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF
CERTAIN ASPECTS OF HEALTHCARE REFORM***

WHEREAS, in 2006, The Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce hosted a conference with key community stakeholders to discuss the state of health care in El Paso, and as a result of the conference prioritized addressing the issue of the uninsured as its number one objective; and,

WHEREAS, The Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce has been working to develop health care programs that will have a positive impact locally, such as El Paso Healthcare Heroes and the Three-Share Program; and,

WHEREAS, the high rate of uninsured in the El Paso region, estimated at 34 percent, has negative ramifications for businesses which impact the local economy through high rates of uncompensated care through our health systems; and,

WHEREAS, health care reform is critical to the business community, as businesses throughout the country currently pay over \$500 billion every year for employees' health insurance.

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY:

RESOLVED, that affordable health coverage, including mental health coverage, should be available to everyone, as receiving care for ailments early in the treatment process will help reduce overall costs for health care.

RESOLVED, that access to health care should focus on primary and preventive care, as well as specialist and outpatient care, not just hospitalization.

RESOLVED, that funding for health care should ideally be outcome-based, rather than procedurally based, with funding available for the whole treatment process and not just procedures, resulting in greater successes in treatment.

RESOLVED, that evidence-based practices should be funded to include community health education, outreach, and navigation assistance to greatly reduce current expenditures and to make the health care system work more efficiently.

RESOLVED, that employers should be credited in some form or fashion for rewarding their employees for health living practices.

RESOLVED, that further savings to the health system will be found through implementation of health information technology to make health systems more productive, reliable, and accurate.

RESOLVED, that a layered funding approach to meet the needs of a diverse consumer group is essential to include primary and preventive coverage with pharmacy and specialist referrals in an integrated network for everyone unable to afford care, as has been successfully demonstrated through El Paso's Health Care Options program.

RESOLVED, that the second aspect to a layered funding approach would be through three-share programs that provide funding for marginally profitable small businesses and low to moderate income worker/owners to assure that the cost of being in business for small businesses is not prohibitive.

RESOLVED, that small business pooling should also be implemented and made available to those small businesses that do not meet the eligibility criteria for programs such as three-share to improve choice and competition, creating a vibrant market place.

RESOLVED, that individuals and small businesses should be able to fully deduct the cost of insurance expenses that are incurred.

RESOLVED, that the insurance system should be reformed by eliminating the use of pre-existing conditions or mandating participation in high-risk pools for consumers with pre-existing conditions, guaranteeing that any individual or entity will be issued a policy, guaranteeing that policies will not be revoked, place reasonable limits on rating differences, allowing individuals and businesses from anywhere in the country to enroll by removing state mandated barriers, and create an individual obligation to obtain coverage.

RESOLVED, that health insurance should be made portable.

RESOLVED, that medical liability reform has benefited states such as Texas and should be applied throughout the country, to further reduce health care costs that are passed on to the consumer.

RESOLVED, that any health care reform that is implemented be deficit neutral and fiscally responsible to the U.S. economy.

RESOLVED, The Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce recognizes the significance of the need to move towards health reform and the need for reform to translate into policy that takes into account our local community's input and measures local impact.

Submitted for approval by the Government Relations Executive Committee of The Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday, September 8, 2009.