

**A RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED BY
LEGISLATORS BURKE, GRANT & MILLER-WILLIAMS**

RE: Ensuring Healthcare for All New Yorkers through the New York Health Act

WHEREAS, access to quality healthcare, together with affordable and sustainable health insurance, are among the most important safeguards for people and provide a sense of security from personal and financial devastation that unfortunately ensues when either of these two pillars lose their footing; and

WHEREAS, with the future of the Affordable Care Act undefined, there is absolutely no doubt that tension and angst exist among people who have gained access to health insurance for the first time, while at the same time there is no guarantee that people negatively impacted by the ACA with higher monthly premiums and unsustainable deductibles will see relief any time soon – and that also creates stress and anxiety for these people, too; and

WHEREAS, New York State could lead the nation in this serious public policy crisis by implementing a proposal that has passed the State Assembly on three separate occasions, in 1992, 2015 and 2016 – that being the New York Health Act, which if implemented, would be the nation's first single-payer health system by expanding the State's Medicare system to include everyone; and

WHEREAS, indeed, during the last session of the New York State Legislature, when the measure was overwhelming passes in the Assembly, the New York Health Act enjoyed 80 sponsors in the Assembly and 22 in the Senate; and

WHEREAS, simply put, it is time for New York State to pass universal healthcare and lead the nation on one of the most important public policy debates of our time; and

WHEREAS, proponents of the measure cite a study by the University of Massachusetts Amherst Economics Department that documents \$45 billion net savings Statewide to families, businesses, and taxpayers if the New York Health Act is implemented, and detail that 98% of households would pay less for healthcare than they do now and 200,000 jobs would be created (<http://www.nyhcampaing.org/>); and

WHEREAS, while New York State currently caps County payments to finance Medicaid, the fiscal burden remains significant for real property taxpayers, and, in Erie County represented 82.9% of the total of property taxes collected in 2012 to fund the County's share, and with a projected Medicaid share for 2017 of nearly \$204 million, the adoption of the New York Health Act would finally offer property taxpayers relief; and

WHEREAS, with reports out of Washington that members of Congress are planning to reconstitute Medicare and Medicaid – that is above and beyond doing away with the ACA, a State like New York must act on its own to ensure that its residents, including older residents, the poor, and people who are disabled, will all have access to quality healthcare and affordable health insurance; and

WHEREAS, with the expected submission of the New York Health Act again in the State Legislature this year, the proposal warrants serious consideration, especially now that the ACA is being dismantled in Washington, with no replacement in sight by Congress or the Trump Administration other than sound bites and vague pronouncements.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, the Erie County Legislature stands in support of the resubmission for the 2017 session of the New York Legislature of the New York Health Act, and goes on record encouraging serious dialogue and consideration of the proposal at a time of serious doubt and concern for the future of healthcare for State residents; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Erie County Legislature's Finance & Management Committee and Health & Human Services Committee invite into a future meeting stakeholders involved with advancing this initiative to discuss the proposal and its impact on property taxpayers and County finances; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be sent to Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz, the Western New York delegations to the New York State Senate and Assembly, and any party deemed necessary and proper.

FISCAL IMPACT: Positive for Erie County government and its residents.