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Resolution Regarding Health Industry Transparency and Accountability

WHEREAS, California's health insurance premiums rose 153% between 2002 and 2011, compared to an overall inflation rate of 29%; and

WHEREAS, Unless current trends are reduced, the cost of employer- based family health insurance is projected to surpass median family income by 2033; and

WHEREAS, Soaring health insurance premiums ride substantially on waste and are ultimately financed by lower take-home pay; and

WHEREAS, Unsafe and ineffective care, defined as "waste" by the Institute of Medicine, accounts for an estimated 30% of total U.S. healthcare spending; and

WHEREAS, Quality defects pose serious threats to health and safety and all patients are at risk for receiving unsafe and ineffective care no matter their race, gender, income level, or where they live; and

WHEREAS, In addition to waste, health care spending is high because prices are high, especially in markets where patients lack choice and information is suppressed on prices, quality, outcomes, and costs; and

WHEREAS, Transparency is widely regarded as essential for establishing fair health plan rate setting and provider accountability for good quality and cost outcomes; and

WHEREAS, Unequal power between consolidated healthcare providers and fragmented healthcare purchasers perpetuates price gouging and the upward redistribution of resources; and

WHEREAS, Health costs won't be controlled until we have access to comprehensive information on provider performance and until purchasers work together to strengthen their market position; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, pursuant to the foregoing, the San Francisco Labor Council will seek, support, and participate in efforts to establish a regional multi-payer database of claims and other health data to establish health system performance transparency while protecting patient confidentiality, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the San Francisco Labor Council will foster union awareness of high health care prices and waste as chief drivers of workers' medical and insurance costs and work with its members, their employers, and

local public officials to adopt similar resolutions and pass local and state legislation to establish full quality and cost transparency and fair pricing in the public interest.

Submitted by Bob Muscat, IFPTE 21, and adopted by the Executive Committee of the San Francisco Labor Council on April 1, 2013.

Respectfully,



Tim Paulson
Executive Director

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