Councilmember Bruce Harrell
Comprehensive Reproductive Health Care
April 16, 2014
Version #3

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION 31541

A RESOLUTION regarding insurance coverage for comprehensive reproductive health care, including abortion, calling on the United States Congress and President Obama to repeal all federal bans on public coverage of abortion and supporting efforts to improve access to public and private insurance coverage for comprehensive reproductive health care, including abortion.

WHEREAS, every woman needs access to a range of safe, affordable and comprehensive reproductive health care throughout her life, including screenings for cancer and sexually transmitted infections, contraceptive services, abortion care, prenatal care, and labor and delivery services; and

WHEREAS, every woman, regardless of income, needs insurance coverage to access these services so that she can seek care from licensed, quality health care providers and so that economic barriers do not determine critical health care decisions; and

WHEREAS, despite the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 ruling in *Roe v. Wade* ensuring the right to abortion in the United States, the U.S. Congress denies coverage of nearly all abortion care for women enrolled in Medicaid or other federal health plans.

WHEREAS, laws that restrict insurance coverage of abortion create unjust obstacles to quality health care and inflict disproportionate harm on low-income women, women of color, and immigrant women, who already face significant barriers to accessing timely, high-quality health care; and

WHEREAS, unintended pregnancy rates are highest among poor and low-income women and women aged 18–24[1]; and

WHEREAS, many women find it difficult to pay for an abortion and are unable to use insurance, and public and private health insurance coverage of abortion care would ease the financial strain experienced by abortion patients[2]; and

WHEREAS, a woman's ability to make a decision about when and whether she will bear children is essential to the health, well-being, and safety of her and her family; and

WHEREAS, as of 2011, over 311,650 women live in Seattle,[3] 67,824 women in Seattle are enrolled in public insurance and over 4,000 women of reproductive age are insured

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[1] Guttmacher Institute, Fact Sheet: Facts on Unintended Pregnancy in the United States (Sept. 2013).
[2] Rachel Jones et al., "At What Cost? Payment for Abortion Care by U.S. Women," Women's Health Issues, Vol. 23, No. 3 (May 2013).
[3] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Demographic and Housing Estimates, Washington and Washington, King County, Seattle.

through the federal government and are therefore subject to federal restrictions on abortion coverage;[4]

WHEREAS, voters in Washington State have consistently affirmed a woman's right to reproductive freedom and privacy, as demonstrated by the passage of Initiative 120, the Reproductive Privacy Act, in 1991 and by the defeat of Initiative 694, which would have criminalized late-term abortions, in 1998;

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle has repeatedly passed resolutions affirming a woman's right to reproductive freedom and privacy, including Resolution No. 27960 (1989) (urging all public officials and the U.S. Supreme Court to maintain freedom of choice for all women, regardless of age or economic condition), Resolution No. 28027 (1989) (urging the state legislature to retain existing legislation protecting a woman's right to obtain an abortion), and Resolution No. 28398 (1991) (calling on Congress to repeal regulations prohibiting abortion counseling at federally-funded family planning clinics);

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE MAYOR CONCURRING, THAT:

Section 1: The City of Seattle recognizes that every woman needs access to a range of safe, affordable and comprehensive reproductive health care, regardless of income, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or age, and that insurance coverage is critical to accessing health care.

Section 2: The City of Seattle calls upon Congress and President Obama to support and reinstate insurance coverage for abortion services for women enrolled in public insurance programs, including women covered through Medicaid and Medicare, the Federal Employees Health Benefits program, insurance through the Peace Corps and federal prison system, Indian Health Services, public insurance in the District of Columbia, and military insurance.

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[4] U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Health Insurance Status by sex by age, Washington and Washington, King County, Seattle;
http://factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/11_1YR/B27006/1600000US5363000;
http://factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/11_1YR/B27008/1600000US5363000;
http://factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/11_1YR/B27009/1600000US5363000.

Section 3: The City of Seattle opposes federal and state laws placing restrictions on insurance plans' coverage of abortion and supports ensuring access to public and private insurance coverage for abortion for all women.

Section 4: The Seattle City Office of Intergovernmental Relations (OIR) will promote these interests with local, regional, state, federal and international governments and will support legislation that advances public and private insurance coverage of comprehensive reproductive health care, including abortion.

Adopted by the City Council the ____ day of _____, 2014, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this____ day of _____, 2014.

_____

President _____of the City Council

THE MAYOR CONCURRING:

_____

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Filed by me this ____ day of _____, 2014.

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Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)

Form revised: February 26, 2014

FISCAL NOTE FOR NON-CAPITAL PROJECTS

Department:	Contact Person/Phone:	CBO Analyst/Phone:
Legislative	Jennifer Samuels/684-8572	

Legislation Title:
A RESOLUTION regarding insurance coverage for comprehensive reproductive health care, including abortion, calling on the United States Congress and President Obama to repeal all federal bans on public coverage of abortion and supporting efforts to improve access to public and private insurance coverage for comprehensive reproductive health care, including abortion.

Summary of the Legislation:
This legislation affirms a woman's right to reproductive freedom and privacy and recognizes that every woman needs access to a range of safe, affordable and comprehensive reproductive health care, regardless of income, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or age, and that insurance coverage is critical to accessing health care.

Additionally, the legislation opposes federal and state laws placing restrictions on insurance plans' coverage of abortion and supports ensuring access to public and private coverage for comprehensive reproductive health for all women; and the legislation urges Congress and President Obama to support and reinstate insurance coverage for abortion services for women enrolled in public insurance programs, including women covered through Medicaid and Medicare, among others.

Finally, the Seattle Office of Intergovernmental Relations (OIR) will promote these interests with local, regional, state, federal and international governments and will support legislation that advances public and private insurance coverage of comprehensive reproductive health care, including abortion.

Background:
(Include a brief description of the purpose and context of legislation and include record of previous legislation and funding history, if applicable.)

Every woman needs access to a range of safe, affordable and comprehensive reproductive health care throughout her life, including screenings for cancer and sexually transmitted infections, contraceptive services, abortion care, prenatal care, and labor and delivery services. Every woman, regardless of income, needs insurance coverage to access these services so that she can seek care from licensed, quality health care providers and so that economic barriers do not determine critical health care decisions. Despite the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 ruling in *Roe v. Wade* ensuring the right to abortion in the United States, the United States Congress denies coverage of nearly all abortion care for women enrolled in Medicaid or other federal health plans.

Additionally, the recent U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc., et al.,* "holds that commercial enterprises, including corporations, partnerships, and sole proprietorships can opt out of any law (saving only tax laws) they judge incompatible with their sincerely held religious beliefs." Having said that, laws or policies that restrict insurance coverage of abortion create unjust obstacles to quality health care and inflict disproportionate harm on low-income women, women of color, and immigrant women, who already face significant barriers to accessing timely, high-quality health care.

Unintended pregnancy rates are highest among poor and low-income women and women aged 18–24. A woman's ability to make a decision about when and whether she will bear children is essential to the health, well-being, and safety of her and her family.

As of 2011, over 311,650 women live in Seattle. In addition, 67,824 women in Seattle are enrolled in public insurance and over 4,000 women of reproductive age are insured through the federal government and are therefore subject to federal restrictions on abortion coverage.

Washington State voters have consistently affirmed a woman's right to reproductive freedom and privacy (as demonstrated by the passage of Initiative 120, the Reproductive Privacy Act, in 1991 and by the defeat of Initiative 694, which would have criminalized late-term abortions, in 1998).

The City of Seattle has repeatedly passed resolutions affirming a woman's right to reproductive freedom and privacy, including Resolution No. 27960 (1989) (urging all public officials and the U.S. Supreme Court to maintain freedom of choice for all women, regardless of age or economic condition), Resolution No. 28027 (1989) (urging the state legislature to retain existing legislation protecting a woman's right to obtain an abortion), and Resolution No. 28398 (1991) (calling on Congress to repeal regulations prohibiting abortion counseling at federally-funded family planning clinics).

Please check one of the following:

__X__ **This legislation does not have any financial implications.**
(Please skip to "Other Implications" section at the end of the document and answer questions a-h. Earlier sections that are left blank should be deleted. Please delete the instructions provided in parentheses at the end of each question.)

____ **This legislation has financial implications.**
(If the legislation has direct fiscal impacts (e.g., appropriations, revenue, positions), fill out the relevant sections below. If the financial implications are indirect or longer-term, describe them in narrative in the "Other Implications" Section. Please delete the instructions provided in parentheses at the end of each title and question.)

Other Implications:

a) **Does the legislation have indirect financial implications, or long-term implications?**
No

b) **What is the financial cost of not implementing the legislation?**
None

c) **Does this legislation affect any departments besides the originating department?**
Yes. This legislation directs the Office of Intergovernmental Relations to promote these interests, as well as support legislation that advances public and private insurance coverage of comprehensive reproductive health care.

d) **What are the possible alternatives to the legislation that could achieve the same or similar objectives?** No

e) **Is a public hearing required for this legislation?**
No

f) **Is publication of notice with *The Daily Journal of Commerce* and/or *The Seattle Times* required for this legislation?**
No

g) **Does this legislation affect a piece of property?**
No

h) **Other Issues: None**

List attachments to the fiscal note below: None