

RESOLUTION #5

**AFT MICHIGAN
70TH CONVENTION
MAY 2-3, 2008**

HEALTH CARE FOR MICHIGAN CAMPAIGN

- Whereas, Rapidly rising health care costs and lack of access to affordable health care have created a national health care crisis. Reports issued by the Michigan Department of Community Health indicate that 11.4 percent or approximately 1.1 million Michigan residents are uninsured and thousands more are underinsured, lacking sufficient health coverage to care for serious illness or injury; and
- Whereas, 700,000 Michigan residents between the ages of 18 to 64 are uninsured and almost 100,000 children (under the age of 18) are uninsured; and
- Whereas, Most of Michigan's uninsured are the working poor. An estimated 60,000 households with a worker eligible for health coverage elects not to take it, 65 percent cannot afford their share of the cost. About 25% of the uninsured are below the 2005 Federal Poverty Level, which means they live on annual incomes of less than \$9,570 for an individual or \$16,090 for a family of three; and
- Whereas, Since 2000, premiums for family coverage have increased by 73% while earnings have only increased by 16%. In 2005, Families USA estimated that, in Michigan, the cost of a family policy increased by \$730 and an individual policy by \$274 per year; and
- Whereas, The percentage of employer-based health coverage continues to steadily decline. The loss of manufacturing jobs combined with the sluggish economy and the rising cost of insurance have eroded employer-based coverage in Michigan; and
- Whereas, Michigan's large automotive industry has been devastated by rising health care costs, which added approximately \$1,500 to the cost of each vehicle according to the Michigan Advisory Council for the Planning Project for the Uninsured. Michigan companies are not able to compete globally with foreign companies with government-based health care; and
- Whereas, Rising health care costs burden local health care systems and threaten the survival of individual providers and hospitals. Families USA reports that \$1.1 billion worth of uncompensated care was provided to Michigan's uninsured in 2005; and
- Whereas, Rising health care costs not only jeopardize Michigan's economy but also jeopardize access to and quality of health care for both the insured and uninsured; and

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Whereas, Studies show that health insurance coverage is an important element in keeping people healthy. The uninsured receive less preventive care, are diagnosed at more advanced disease stages, receive less care and have higher mortality rates than the insured; and

Whereas, On January 8, 2008, the Michigan Health Care Security Ballot Campaign was initiated, it would place on the November 2008 ballot, a proposal mandating health care coverage for all residents; and

Whereas, The ballot proposal would amend Article 4, Section 51 of the Michigan Constitution of 1963, to read as follows:

The State Legislature shall pass laws to make sure that every Michigan resident has affordable and comprehensive health care coverage through a fair and cost-effective financing system. The Legislature is required to pass a plan that, through public or private measures, controls health care costs and provides for medically necessary preventive, primary, acute and chronic health care needs. NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED: That AFT Michigan urges reform to Michigan's health care system to eliminate the devastating effects of the rising cost of health care, which continues to hinder the growth of Michigan's economy and jeopardizes access to and quality of health care. AND BE IT FURTHER,

RESOLVED: That AFT Michigan endorses the Michigan Health Care Security Ballot Campaign and encourages all citizens to support the ballot proposal, and BE IT FINALLY,

RESOLVED: Michigan's health care system must be restructured and strengthened to provide adequate and affordable health care to all residents.

Submitted by:
Legislation Committee