

Colorado Citizens Initiative #12 "Right to Health Care"

Proposed Constitutional Amendment

In the constitution of the state of Colorado, add Section 32 to Article 2 as follows:

Article 2, Section 32. Right to health care

- (1) As a matter of human right and public good for all residing in Colorado, access to an appropriate single standard of high quality health care without financial barrier shall be provided through one public health insurance program. Inasmuch as public roads, schools, libraries, and public safety services have long been held in Colorado as matters affecting the public well-being of all residents, access to high quality health care as a part of our individual and collective quality of life shall not be treated as a private, for-profit commodity in Colorado.
- (2) Following the passage of implementing legislation, premiums shall be collected by the Colorado Department of Revenue for coverage in public health insurance plan, and at no time will the premiums collected for this public health insurance be controlled or administered by any for-profit, non-public entity or corporation. It shall not be necessary for any Colorado resident to carry any other private health coverage for necessary health care services and needs following implementation of the public health insurance plan. No Colorado resident shall ever again be forced to declare personal bankruptcy due to medical crisis or debt, nor shall any Colorado business be forced to make its business decisions based on the costs of providing health care coverage to its employees. At no time will the premium costs or any other cost for accessing necessary care exceed nine (9) percent of an individual's income (from all sources), and there shall not be any income cap that shields wealthier individuals from full participation in the public program. There shall be no financial barriers to necessary medical care, as determined by patients and their physicians or other covered health providers. Covered benefits will be determined as defined in implementing legislation.
- (3) All Colorado residents will be covered for the same level necessary medical, mental health, dental, and long term care services at least as broad or broader in scope as required under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA). Full implementation of this public health coverage no later than January 2017, the date at which states will be allowed under the ACA to be granted waivers for such innovative solutions to their health care coverage needs.
- (4) The designation of health care as a basic right for all is consistent with the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25, Section 1, as adopted on December 10, 1948, which states, "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control." Eleanor Roosevelt was one of the drafters of this Declaration, and the United States signed on in recognition of its full support. The people of Colorado pledge with passage of this initiative to advance the promise of this U.S. backed commitment to human rights for all and specifically the human right to health care.