

Introduced by Senators Lara and AtkinsFebruary 17, 2017

An act relating to health care coverage.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 562, as introduced, Lara. Californians For A Healthy California Act.

Existing federal law, the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), enacted various health care coverage market reforms that took effect January 1, 2014. PPACA required each state, by January 1, 2014, to establish an American Health Benefit Exchange to facilitate the purchase of qualified health benefit plans by qualified individuals and qualified small employers. PPACA defines a "qualified health plan" as a plan that, among other requirements, provides an essential health benefits package. Existing state law creates the California Health Benefit Exchange, also known as Covered California, to facilitate the purchase of qualified health plans by qualified individuals and qualified small employers.

Existing law, the Knox-Keene Health Care Service Plan Act of 1975, provides for the licensure and regulation of health care service plans by the Department of Managed Health Care. Existing law provides for the regulation of health insurers by the Department of Insurance.

This bill would make findings and declarations with regard to the availability and affordability of health care coverage and would state the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that would establish a comprehensive universal single-payer health care coverage program and a health care cost control system for the benefit of all residents of the state.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. This act shall be known, and may be cited, as the
2 Californians for a Healthy California Act.

3 SEC. 2. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the
4 following:

5 (1) All residents of this state have the right to health care. While
6 the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act brought
7 many improvements in health care and health care coverage, it
8 still leaves many Californians without coverage or with inadequate
9 coverage.

10 (2) Californians, as individuals, employers, and taxpayers have
11 experienced a rise in the cost of health care and health care
12 coverage in recent years, including rising premiums, deductibles,
13 and copays, as well as restricted provider networks and high
14 out-of-network charges.

15 (3) Businesses have also experienced increases in the costs of
16 health care benefits for their employees, and many employers are
17 shifting a larger share of the cost of coverage to their employees
18 or dropping coverage entirely.

19 (4) Individuals often find that they are deprived of affordable
20 care and choice because of decisions by health benefit plans guided
21 by the plan’s economic needs rather than consumers’ health care
22 needs.

23 (5) To address the fiscal crisis facing the health care system and
24 the state, and to ensure Californians can exercise their right to
25 health care, comprehensive health care coverage needs to be
26 provided.

27 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that
28 would establish a comprehensive universal single-payer health
29 care coverage program and a health care cost control system for
30 the benefit of all residents of the state.