WHEREAS, Between 1991 and 2014, health care spending in Rhode Island per person rose by over 250 percent - rising much faster than income and greatly reducing disposable income; and

WHEREAS, It is estimated that by 2025, the cost of health insurance for an average family of four will equal their annual income; and

WHEREAS, In the United States, about 66 percent of personal bankruptcies have been medical cost-related and of these, about three-fourths of those bankrupted had health insurance; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island private businesses bear most of the costs of employee health insurance coverage and spend significant time and money choosing from a confusing array of increasingly expensive plans which do not provide comprehensive coverage; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island employees and retirees are losing significant wages and pensions as they are forced to pay higher amounts of health insurance and health care costs; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island and its municipalities face enormous Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) unfunded liabilities mostly due to health insurance costs; and

WHEREAS, Although Rhode Island significantly expanded health care coverage for its citizens under the federal Affordable Care Act (ACA), as of 2018, about 42,000 Rhode Islanders remain uninsured, and even fully implemented, the ACA would leave many Rhode Islanders

RESPECTFULLY URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO PASS LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING AN IMPROVED “MEDICARE FOR ALL” SINGLE PAYER PROGRAM THAT WOULD PROVIDE UNIVERSAL, COMPREHENSIVE, AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

Introduced By: Representatives Walsh, Ajello, Kislak, and Ranglin-Vassell

Date Introduced: February 26, 2020

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare
uninsured and many more underinsured - resulting in numerous deaths per year; and

WHEREAS, Efforts at the federal level to repeal or defund the ACA, Medicare and
Medicaid further threaten the health and welfare of Rhode Islanders; and

WHEREAS, The United States has hundreds of health insurance carriers (i.e., multiple
“payers”) who make our health care system unjustifiably inefficient and expensive - with about
1/3 of every health care dollar going towards administrative costs and not towards actual health
care; and

WHEREAS, Every industrialized nation in the world, except the United States, offers
universal health care to its citizens under a "single payer" program and enjoys better health
outcomes for about one-half the cost; and

WHEREAS, Health care is rationed under our current multi-payer system, despite the
fact that Americans already pay enough money to have comprehensive and universal health
insurance under a single-payer system; and

WHEREAS, Single payer health care would establish a true "free market" system where
doctors compete for patients rather than health insurance companies dictating which patients are
able to see which doctors and setting reimbursement rates; and

WHEREAS, The high costs of medical care could be lowered significantly if the state
could negotiate on behalf of all its residents for bulk purchasing, as well as gain access to usage
and price information currently kept confidential by private health insurers as "proprietary
information"; and

WHEREAS, Proposed federal improved Medicare-For-All single payer legislation will
provide comprehensive coverage by substituting lower amounts of increased taxes for higher
amounts of premiums, co-pays, deductibles and payments for amounts in excess of caps; and

WHEREAS, Such comprehensive coverage will include vision, hearing and dental care,
mental health and substance abuse services, as well as prescription medications, medical
equipment, supplies, diagnostics and treatments; and

WHEREAS, Health care providers will benefit under improved Medicare-For-All single
payer because they will spend significantly less time with administrative work caused by multiple
health insurance company requirements and barriers to care delivery and will spend significantly
less for overhead costs because of streamlined billing; and

WHEREAS, There is extensive research that shows an improved Medicare-For-All single
payer program will benefit all Americans by providing universal comprehensive affordable health
care coverage; establishing a funding system that is public, progressive, and sustainable; and
containing health care costs; now, therefore be it
RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations hereby recognizes the need for the United States government to implement an improved Medicare-For-All single payer program and hereby respectfully urges Congress to pass single payer legislation currently before it as HR 1384 and S. 1129; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the clerk of the United States House of Representatives, the clerk of the United States Senate, and to members of the Rhode Island Congressional Delegation.