WHEREAS, the quality and cost of healthcare affects every resident and citizen of the United States, whether the individual is covered by public or private insurance or is uninsured; and

WHEREAS, the health and well-being of Hawaii's residents and families has always been of paramount concern to the Legislature and the people of the State of Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that access to health care is a fundamental human right, the Legislature of the State of Hawaii enacted the Hawaii Prepaid Health Care Act in 1974, the first law in the nation to set minimum standards of health care coverage for workers; and

WHEREAS, for over forty years, the Hawaii Prepaid Health Care Act has protected the welfare of the people of Hawaii, offering residents unparalleled access to health care benefits and services through various mandates, such as requiring employers who employ one or more full-time employees to provide health insurance, setting the standards for health care coverage in Hawaii, limiting the amount that employees must contribute to premiums, and requiring employees to accept employer-provided coverage unless covered under another health insurance plan; and

WHEREAS, enactment of the Hawaii Prepaid Health Care Act has resulted in Hawaii having robust health care plans, low uninsured rates, and some of the lowest premiums in the country, and although Hawaii experiences some of the same issues relative to access, quality, and cost of health care as other states.
across the country, the Hawaii Prepaid Health Care Act has ensured health care system stability throughout the State; and

WHEREAS, prior to the enactment of the Hawaii Prepaid Health Care Act, the percentage of Hawaii residents maintaining health care insurance coverage hovered in the seventy percent range; and

WHEREAS, after enactment of the Hawaii Prepaid Health Care Act, the percentage of residents in Hawaii maintaining health care insurance coverage increased to the ninety percent range and has remained in that range ever since, positively impacting the health and well-being of all the residents of Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, attempts have been made over the past two decades to make universal health care a reality for all residents of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the most significant federal regulatory overhaul and expansion of medical care coverage since the establishment of Medicare and Medicaid in 1965 occurred in 2010 with the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which mandates that every citizen of the United States maintain health care insurance coverage through various means, including employer health care insurance plans, or face an income tax surcharge; and

WHEREAS, while passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act made insurance available to between 32,000,000 and 50,000,000 more Americans, or 95 percent of the legal resident population, and brought the United States closer to achieving a system of universal health care, a significant number of individuals in the United States remain uninsured; and

WHEREAS, H.R. No. 676 has been introduced in the 115th Congress of the United States and establishes the Medicare for All Program to provide all individuals residing in the United States and territories of the United States with free health care that includes all medically necessary care, such as primary care and prevention, dietary and nutritional therapies,
WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of Hawaii continues to believe that the availability of health care for all is a human right, that the United States should strive to achieve a system of universal health care that includes all residents of this country, and that H.R. No. 676, introduced in the United States Congress, deserves full consideration and passage; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2018, that the Congress of the United States is urged to enact legislation such as H.R. No. 676 that provides universal health care to all; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and members of Hawaii's Congressional delegation.

OFFERED BY: 

MAR 09 2018