

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
**2011 Legislative Session**

Resolution No. CR-27-2011

Proposed by Council Members Turner, Harrison, Franklin

Introduced by Council Members Turner, Harrison, Franklin, Toles, Olson,  
Johnson, Lehman and Patterson

Date of Introduction April 5, 2011

**RESOLUTION**

1 A RESOLUTION concerning

2 Access to Health Care

3 For the purpose of expressing the County Council’s support for establishing a Health Care  
4 Improvement Plan which assesses Health and Healthcare in Prince George’s County and  
5 promotes access to quality healthcare for the residents of the County, including a long-term  
6 solution to the County healthcare system.

7 WHEREAS, issues of health equity related to access to care, food insecurity, homelessness,  
8 gender inequality, immigration status, educational attainment, employment status, language  
9 barriers and racism are all related to individual and community health status; and

10 WHEREAS, in April 2010, the County Council adopted CR-12-2010 endorsing the Prince  
11 George’s County’s health needs assessment “Assessing Health and Health Care in Prince  
12 George’s County RAND Health Report” recommendations; and

13 WHEREAS the Prince George’s County population in the 2010 Census was 863,420  
14 persons, with 85% of the County’s population being members of racial or ethnic minority  
15 groups; and

16 WHEREAS, in Prince George’s County 20.2% of the County population under the age of  
17 65 is uninsured and is the highest percentage and absolute number of uninsured persons of all  
18 Maryland counties and Baltimore City; and

19 WHEREAS, racial and ethnic health disparities exist in Prince George’s County for many  
20 conditions, including heart disease and cancer, the two leading causes of death; and

21 WHEREAS, Prince George’s County inner beltway communities of Central and Southern  
22 Prince George’s County have the highest levels of chronic disease mortality from heart disease,

1 cancer, diabetes, and strokes as well as “all-cause” mortality; and

2 WHEREAS, Prince George’s County age-adjusted death rates for diabetes and heart disease  
3 are significantly worse than the State of Maryland averages and ranks number four of 24  
4 Maryland jurisdictions for highest number of “premature deaths” in persons of all ages and from  
5 all causes; and

6 WHEREAS, racial and ethnic health disparities exist in Prince George’s County for obesity  
7 and diabetes, both of which are becoming more common in the County, the State, and the Nation  
8 as a whole; and

9 WHEREAS, Prince George’s County has the second highest percent of overweight and/or  
10 obese adults in comparison with other counties in the State of Maryland; and

11 WHEREAS, Prince George’s County’s children and adolescents have high levels of  
12 obesity, which is associated with increased death from “all causes” in adulthood, and places this  
13 group at increased risk for diabetes, hyperlipidemia and hypertension with negative  
14 consequences for their health in childhood and adolescence, as well as in the future; and

15 WHEREAS, the Institute of Medicine recommends that “eliminating health disparities and  
16 achieving health equity should be priorities in any childhood obesity prevention effort”; and

17 WHEREAS, in Prince George’s County the number one cause of childhood  
18 hospitalizations, ages zero to seventeen, is asthma; and

19 WHEREAS, both the African American infant mortality rate and the African American  
20 infant mortality disparity in Prince George’s County showed improvement in 2009 with  
21 increasingly targeted and focused intervention programs over the past several years; and

22 WHEREAS, in Prince George’s County, access to oral health services has improved  
23 through efforts of the County’s Health Department, but continues to be limited for low income  
24 families; and

25 WHEREAS, Prince George’s County is experiencing growth from the new arrival of  
26 families, many of whom are ethnic and racial minorities; and

27 WHEREAS, Federal and State leaders have recognized that local governments serve a  
28 unique role in providing health care access by building and maintaining delivery systems that  
29 respect the unique needs of individuals throughout the community; and

30 WHEREAS, Prince George’s County has substantial partnerships with the Department of  
31 Health and Mental Hygiene, the University of Maryland Medical System, the University of

1 Maryland School of Public Health, Dimensions Healthcare System and Bowie State University  
2 that address improving the health of county residents; and

3 WHEREAS, the Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities has published  
4 a 5-year Plan that sets strategies and recommendations for improving the health of racial and  
5 ethnic minorities and all populations experiencing health disparities; and

6 WHEREAS, Prince George's County through its health related departments and community  
7 partners seeks to improve the health of its citizens with access to prevention and wellness  
8 programs that result in better health outcomes, increased productivity and reduced costs; and

9 WHEREAS, the Prince George's County Council is concerned about the health and well  
10 being of its citizens and is striving to ensure that all County residents have access to quality  
11 healthcare; and

12 WHEREAS, the Prince George's County Council is the Legislative Branch of Prince  
13 George's County Government and sits as the Board of Health to govern and guide County health  
14 policy; and

15 WHEREAS, the County Council as the Board of Health is authorized to enact laws for the  
16 protection and promotion of public health; and

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Prince George's County Council  
18 supports access to affordable, quality healthcare for all Prince Georgians and seeks fair and  
19 practical solutions that will reduce healthcare costs and improve access to care; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Access to Health Care Improvement Plan directs  
21 the County's Health Officer to present a Blue Print to Improving Access to Healthcare within  
22 Prince George's County to include the following actions to be taken by the Prince George's  
23 County Government to support policies which promote continuous, affordable access to health  
24 care for all Prince Georgians by October 1, 2011:

- 25 (1) Improve health outcomes for infants, women, children, adolescents, adults and senior  
26 citizens of every race and ethnicity in Prince George's County for the health and well  
27 being of County residents and the community at large;
- 28 (2) Increase the number of primary care and specialty care physicians providing healthcare  
29 services within Prince George's County through recruitment and retention strategies as  
30 a part of improving access to care for every Prince Georgian regardless of their age;
- 31 (3) Build and strengthen the healthcare delivery safety net infrastructure to increase access

1 to healthcare services for all Prince George’s County residents; including the insured,  
2 uninsured as well as underinsured;

3 (4) Increase the number of federally qualified health centers in Prince George’s County  
4 which would improve access to critically needed comprehensive healthcare services  
5 that are associated with improving community health outcomes at both ends of the  
6 lifecycle at reduced costs to individuals as well as for the community; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Prince George’s County Council recognizes the  
8 shared responsibility with the State of Maryland to provide access to quality healthcare services  
9 in the County; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Council is hereby directed to send a  
11 copy of this Resolution to the Honorable Joshua M. Sharfstein, MD, Secretary of the Maryland  
12 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Dr. Carlessia A. Hussein, Director, Maryland Office  
13 of Minority Health and Health Disparities; and Dr. Donald Shell, Prince George’s County Health  
14 Officer.

Adopted this 21st day of June, 2011.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE  
GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ingrid M. Turner  
Chair

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Redis C. Floyd  
Clerk of the Council