

9/16/2024

RESOLUTION NO. M-\_\_\_\_\_

A RESOLUTION expressing a collective position of the Vancouver City Council in opposition to Washington State Initiative No. 2124 which concerns state long term care insurance, and which, if passed, would provide that employees and self-employed people must elect to keep coverage under RCW 50B.04, could opt-out any time, and would repeal a law governing an exemption for employees.

WHEREAS, the WA Cares Fund is a healthcare program funded through a mandatory payroll tax that provides long-term health services benefits (such as home health care, adult day care, nursing home care, and group home care) to qualifying individuals; and

WHEREAS, the WA Cares Fund is the first state-operated long-term care insurance program in the country; and

WHEREAS, as of 2024, self-employed individuals that opt in to the program cannot opt out of the program unless they become no longer self-employed or retire and, as of 2024, the program offered limited pathways for exemptions from paying into the program; and

WHEREAS, individuals who timely opted out of the program are not required to maintain ongoing long-term care insurance and approximately 64% of Vancouver City employees continue to have payroll deductions withheld for coverage under the WA Cares Fund; and

WHEREAS, Washington State Initiative No. 2124 would allow employees and self-employed individuals to opt out of coverage under WA Cares, and an individual that opts out of

the program would not be required to pay the payroll tax assessed on employees' wages that funds the program; and

WHEREAS, if passed, Initiative No. 2124 could ultimately undermine the financial viability, and availability, of the WA Cares Fund which confers a valuable statewide benefit to many individuals who could not otherwise obtain long term care insurance at affordable rates in the private market; and

WHEREAS, on September 16, 2024, following notice and publication in accordance with Washington law, the City of Vancouver held a public hearing and allowed approximately equal amounts of time for those wishing to speak in favor of, and opposition to, the proposed ballot initiative.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER:

Section 1. The City Council hereby expresses a collective position in opposition to Washington State Initiative No. 2124 because, if passed, Initiative No. 2124 could ultimately undermine the financial viability, and availability, of the WA Cares Fund which confers a valuable statewide benefit to many individuals who could not otherwise obtain long term care insurance at affordable rates in the private market.

ADOPTED at a Regular Meeting of the Vancouver City Council this 16th day of  
September, 2024.

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Anne McEnery-Ogle, Mayor

Attest:

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Natasha Ramras, City Clerk

Approved as to form:

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Jonathan Young, City Attorney