

care; and

Whereas, From 2013 to 2017, the cost of services at New York metropolitan area hospitals rose 22%, and as of 2017 they were 19% above the national median cost; and

Whereas, The future of our city and state depends on our ability to rein in the hospital costs so every New Yorker can access the care they need; and

Whereas, We must do more to ensure a more equitable city, especially for those who were disproportionately impacted, both physically and financially, during the COVID-19 crisis; and

Whereas, New Yorkers from vulnerable immigrant communities and communities of color are also disproportionately impacted by the rapidly escalating cost of health care across New York and the nation; and

Whereas, Demanding fair pricing from large hospital systems is about much more than fixing a longstanding barrier to health care, it is a step closer to creating a truly equitable and affordable state; and

Whereas, S.7199, introduced by Senator Andrew Gounardes, and A.8169, introduced by Assembly Member Catalina Cruz, would prohibit certain provisions in insurance and Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) contracts that require the insurer to include within the scope of the contract all covered groups of the insurer for access to the insurer's network of participating providers and other similar anticompetitive provisions; and

Whereas, The Hospital Equity and Affordability Legislation (HEAL) is aimed at preventing anti-competitive hospital contracting practices and out-of-control pricing structures that hurt patients and act as a barrier to affordable care; and

Whereas, HEAL seeks to prohibit practices such as striking backroom deals with insurers to keep prices secret and preventing innovative programming that benefits patients; and

Whereas, Stakeholders and unions, including the 32BJ Health Fund, which provides benefits to nearly 100,000 32BJ members and their families, have fully supported HEAL; and

Whereas, Protecting access to high-quality health care is a question of basic human rights that will

guarantee that hard-working New Yorker will no longer pay for opaque and bloated healthcare costs; and

Whereas, We have to strive and move closer to greater health equity in the City of New York; and
therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign, S.7199/A.8169, the Hospital Equity and Affordability Legislation (HEAL Act), that aims to improve market access and increase transparency of health insurance contracts by banning certain anti-competitive provisions.

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