

FINAL RESOLUTION

Approved by delegates to the 2022 Constitutional Convention of the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO in Wenatchee on July 21, 2022

RESOLUTION TO STOP PRIVATIZING OUR MEDICARE SYSTEM

Resolution #2022.02

Submitted by MLK Labor

WHEREAS, since 1965 Medicare has been our national health care system for seniors and the disabled in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Medicare beneficiaries are among the most vulnerable populations served in health care, and need more, not fewer benefits and protections; and

WHEREAS, traditional Medicare holds sacred the relationship between Medicare beneficiaries and their chosen health care provider; and

WHEREAS, traditional Medicare, is a public good, and should not be privatized; and

WHEREAS, Wall Street has for decades tried and failed to privatize our Social Security system; and

WHEREAS, the prospect of Wall Street getting a piece of what is projected to be \$ 1.6 trillion of annual Medicare spending by 2028 has led to a rush to buy-up Accountable Care Organizations for managing Medicare services; and

WHEREAS, the Trump administration opened the door to the complete privatization of Medicare through a Direct Contracting pilot program allowing private equity firms, insurance companies, and corporate health businesses to directly contract to provide Medicare services; and

WHEREAS, the Biden administration ended the Direct Contracting pilot and rebranded it as the ACO REACH (Accountable Care Organization Realizing Equity, Access, and Community Health) pilot to begin in January of 2023; and

WHEREAS, public health advocates across the country see little difference between ACO REACH and the Direct Contracting pilot since both pilot programs allow third-party private entities to wedge themselves between patients and their healthcare providers and to draw down the Medicare Trust Fund by making huge profits in several ways, including weakening services for Medicare beneficiaries; and

WHEREAS, nothing in the ACO REACH pilot spells out a systemic way to address the real inequities suffered by BIPOC individuals and BIPOC communities due to historic under-resourcing; and

WHEREAS, addressing real equity issues can be done within the traditional Medicare system; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO go on record against the privatization of our Medicare system, for terminating the ACO REACH pilot program, closing the door on third party entities in our Medicare system; and be it finally

RESOLVED that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO send a copy of this Resolution to our two U.S. Senators and Congressional House members in their jurisdiction, as well as to President Biden and to the Secretary of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra.