COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

AGENDA ITEM [ms-0398.020.018.001]

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
BRIAN P. BILBRAY
FIRST DISTRICT
GEORGE F. BAILEY
SECOND DISTRICT
SUSAN GOLDING
THIRD DISTRICT
LEON L. WILLIAMS
FOURTH DISTRICT
JOHN MACDONALD
FIFTH DISTRICT

DATE: December 10, 1991

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT: **Blue Ribbon Health Committee (Requested by Supervisor Leon L. Williams)**

SUMMARY:

Issue

Should the Board of Supervisors establish a Blue Ribbon Health Committee which will examine and make recommendations which address issues contributing to the Health Care Crisis of this County?

Reference by Supervisor Leon L. Williams

On November 26th, the Chief Administrative Officer presented to the Board of Supervisors recommendations for addressing the County's 1991-92 budget deficit, which is projected to exceed $20 million. Throughout our 1991-92 budget process, law enforcement, children services, prevention, health and infrastructure have been identified as service priorities of this Board. Our attempts to eliminate or decrease this budget deficit will most certainly result in a decrease in service delivery capability in each priority area.

RECOMMENDATION

Direct the CAO to:

- Return to the Board on January 7, 1992 with recommendations for the immediate establishment and composition of an Ad-Hoc Blue Ribbon Health Committee which will address those areas listed below and other areas which are important for this Board to consider.

- Examine in conjunction with the Committee, the County's responsibility (and provide recommendations for modification of the code, if any) in the County's provision of health care for residents under Section 17000 of the Welfare & Institutions Code.

- Examine in conjunction with the Committee, models available for publicly financed health care systems.

SUBJECT: Blue Ribbon Health Committee

RECOMMENDATION, Continued:

- Examine in conjunction with the Committee, the impact of current federal initiatives and discussions on health care systems and identify how and when these intiatives will impact the County's Health Care Crisis.

- Identify in conjunction with the Committee, incentives which would encourage small businesses to provide health insurance and/or participate in universal health insurance.

- Identify in conjunction with the Committee, opportunities for the County's participation in legislative changes addressing health care delivery liability and tort reform which improve the efficiency of health care systems.

- Appoint Supervisor Leon Williams as a Chair to this committee.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

BACKGROUND

As you are aware, the County, having to address the serious underfunding from the State in the County Medical Services program, recently approved the transfer of responsibility for delivery of medical services back to the State. As a result of this action and the County budget deficit identified at that time, many individuals, groups and organizations provided testimony to the board which described the impact that elimination or reduction of medical services would have on the lives of county residents.

On June 25, 1991 the courts ordered the State to continue its 1989-90 fiscal responsibility for delivery of medical services to the 25,000 medically indigent county residents utilizing the County's Medical Service System.

On July 23, 1991 the Board approved the development of a task force to address the delivery of County Medical Services.

During January of 1992, the County Board of Supervisors will begin to review the delivery of health services to the indigent population under the new concept of "Realignment". Many uncertainties still remain such as the fiscal impact on this County since the legislature's adoption of "Realignment" measures. These uncertainties will increase when impacted by the addition of a projected $4 billion State budget deficit.

SUBJECT: Blue Ribbon Health Committee

BACKGROUND, Continued:

The status of our County Medical Service System is such that we can no longer sustain additional fiscal resources decreases without jeopardizing the very provision of health services. The incidence of chronic disease is at an increase across the country.

Children, who are our greatest assets, are subject to numerous illnesses resulting from the lack of routine medical check-ups, early medical intervention at the onset of illnesses, and lack of vaccinations. There were over 900 reported cases of children with measles in 1990. Three of them died. Appropriate medical care and measles vaccination may have prevented many of our children from contracting this potentially deadly disease. Senior citizens who have made invaluable contributions to this county and nation are drastically impacted by the lack of affordable health care. During the period from September 1990 through October 1991, over 4,000 women delivered children with no prenatal care.

The lack of health care has reached a state of crisis for many residents of this County. I find it extremely important to commit ourselves to coordinating resources which prevent the dysfunction of families as a result of poor health conditions. The unknown factors still associated with the implementation of "realignment" combined with a number of economic variables will continue to reduce the resources available for this County to fulfill its responsibility in providing health care services to our 2.5 million residents.

There is no question that the lack of health services will have a long range impact on the quality of life for individuals, families, neighborhoods and cities in this County. However, the County of San Diego is recognized as a leader throughout the state in developing innovative and successful approaches towards resolving major issues impacting the residents of California.

Therefore, if we are to respond appropriately to the health needs of our 2.5 million residents, we must face the challenge of redesigning our delivery of health care. All forms of redesign activities will require legislative action along with simultaneous coordination among public and private resources.

Our per capita rate of State general funds received in San Diego has yet to be resolved. If San Diego were to receive the statewide average, which I believe is justly due us, we would have an additional $100 million per fiscal year for

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BACKGROUND, Continued:

provision of services. Priority must be given to continue working with our legislative representatives to diligently pursued the rectification of this injustice.

The increasing number of residents who have no health insurance has reached drastic proportions. Currently, there are approximately 575,000 residents who are ineligible for County medical services and have no medical insurance. This figure is comprised mostly of children and individuals employed, yet offered no health insurance by their employers.

We must take immediate action to redesign our drastically under-funded health care system. The solution lies in collaboration of business, government, the communities at risk and providers; working together to utilize existing resources more efficiently. Education of the public to adjust their expectations and to play a role in our own wellness must also be addressed.

The Boards' action of July 23, 1991 should be acted upon immediately in order to address the above concerns and other areas necessary for the resolution to this County's Health Care Crisis.

Respectfully Submitted,

LEON L. WILLIAMS
Board of Supervisors
Fourth District

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SUBJECT: Blue Ribbon Health Committee

SUPV. DISTRICT: ALL

COUNTY COUNSEL APPROVAL: Form and Legality ( )Yes ( )N/A
( )Standard Form ( )Ordinance ( )Resolution

AUDITOR APPROVAL: (X)N/A ( )Yes 4 VOTES: ( )Yes ( )No

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REVIEW: ( )Yes ( )No N/A

CONTRACT REVIEW PANEL: ( )Approved _____
(X)N/A

CONTRACT NUMBER(S): N/A

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTION: July 23, 1991

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE: N/A

CITIZEN COMMITTEE STATEMENT: N/A

POLICY B-51 STATEMENT OF SUPPORT:

CONCURRENCES:

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Fourth Supervisorial District

CONTACT PERSON: ISABELLE T. PEREZ S30/531-5544 A500

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CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER MEETING DATE