The Medicare for All resolution: "not necessarily a priority for the city"

The Bethlehem Gadfly City government November 9, 2019

❧ The latest in a series of posts on City government ❧

Peter Crownfield is officially retired but spends most of his time working with students in his role as internship coordinator for the Alliance for Sustainable Communities–Lehigh Valley.

Gadfly:

I'm not sure what actually prompted someone to put this [Medicare for All] on the agenda. It doesn't seem like "city business," but the resolution does make the point that ever-increasing healthcare costs do impact the city budget. Other than that, it seems to be factual, but not necessarily a priority for the city. And I agree with Bruce that it might make more sense for Council to focus more on the many areas of city operations and legislation that seem to need more attention.

It should be obvious to all that Bruce knows how to run a successful business (having been a key person in bringing the Hotel Bethlehem back from collapse to its current position as a thriving business).

We should, however, consider some facts about "Medicare for All" and what it could accomplish:

1. The US has the highest healthcare costs of any of the "developed nations";

2. US healthcare outcomes are among the worst of any of these countries; (year after year, global statistics put the US around #40 in the ranking of healthcare systems—just above Slovenia);

3. Financial analyses show that nationalized, single-payer coverage would dramatically reduce overall healthcare costs. It would, obviously, cause an increase in taxes, but that would be more than offset by the elimination of premiums for private health insurance.

Peter