

San Francisco to insure uninsured

July 27 2006

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors has voted unanimously in favor of a plan to provide universal health insurance for San Franciscans.

Officials are still working out the details, and the Chamber of Commerce predicts a court fight because businesses that do not provide health coverage would be required to help fund it, the San Francisco Chronicle reported.

The program is projected to cost \$200 million, with funding coming from the city budget, individual premiums and business payments.

The San Francisco Health Access Program would cover more than 80,000 city residents who are now uninsured. The plan would not be mandatory but is based on the assumption that anyone who now lacks health insurance would be willing to pay for coverage.

Two states have developed plans for universal coverage.

In Massachusetts, the uninsured are required to purchase coverage with subsidies for low-income residents. Vermont's plan provides subsidies for insurance paid for from cigarette taxes and payments by businesses that do not offer employees health insurance.

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