Resolution No.   289   September 10, 2008

Amending Personnel Policy Manual For Ulster County And Ulster County Employee Handbook To Provide Health Insurance Benefits To Include Heterosexual Domestic Partners Of Employees Of Ulster County Equal To Those Currently Provided To Spouses

Legislator Frank Dart offers the following:

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution No. 30 dated January 3, 2007, health insurance coverage to include same-gender domestic partners (i.e. a person of the opposite sex with whom an employee resides and maintains an exclusive, committed, long-term relationship of mutual support and financial responsibility) of County employees, and Article IV (B) of the Personnel Policy Manual for Ulster County and Article VII (H) of the Ulster County Employee Handbook were amended to include same-gender domestic partner, and to apply all benefits outlined in the aforementioned articles to same-gender domestic partners, and

WHEREAS, the State of New York and various counties, cities and governmental entities throughout the State and numerous employers in the private sector have extended health insurance benefits to the domestic partners of their unmarried employees whether or not they are same-gender or opposite-sex domestic partners, and

WHEREAS, a heterosexual domestic partner is a person of the opposite sex with whom an employee resides and maintains an exclusive, committed, long-term relationship of mutual support and financial responsibility, and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Legislature believes that it is in the best interests of the County of Ulster to accord health insurance benefits to heterosexual domestic partners of unmarried County employees equivalent to the benefits available to spouses of County employees, and

WHEREAS, the Health Services Committee has met and reviewed said request with a majority of the members voting approval, and

WHEREAS, the Ways and Means Committee has met and reviewed said request with a majority of the members voting approval.

RESOLVED, that in order to extend health insurance coverage to include heterosexual domestic partners of County employees, Article IV (B) of the Personnel Policy Manual for Ulster County and Article VII (H) of the Ulster County Employee Handbook are hereby amended to incorporate the definition of a heterosexual domestic partner as described above, and to apply all benefits outlined in the aforementioned articles to heterosexual domestic partners, and

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FURTHER RESOLVED, that this amendment to the above referenced Personnel Policy Manual for Ulster County and the Ulster County Employee Handbook shall apply solely to including heterosexual domestic partners, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that in implementing the above amendments, the County hereby adopts, as a minimum standard, the requirements for enrollment of heterosexual domestic partners applied by the State for its employees since 1993, including submission of proof of joint residency for one year and affidavits of financial interdependence, in the form attached, with supporting documents, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that upon the termination of a heterosexual domestic partnership as a result of the death or marriage of the non-employee partner or upon the termination of said domestic partnership by either partner, the County employee may not obtain health insurance benefits for a new heterosexual domestic partner until said new domestic partnership has been in effect for a continuous period of one year, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this legislation shall take effect immediately upon adoption of said resolution, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the County Legislature is directed to forward certified copies of this resolution to the appropriate County officials,

and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: NOES:

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
TO BE DETERMINED

0918

REFERRED BACK TO COMMITTEE