



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

October 18, 2016

Motion 14751

Proposed No. 2016-0439.2

**Sponsors Gossett, McDermott, Kohl-Welles,
Balducci and Dembowski**

1 A MOTION supporting the expansion of the Social
2 Security and Medicare programs and benefits and the
3 elimination of the cap on earnings that are subject to the
4 Social Security payroll tax, and directing the council clerk
5 to distribute this motion to Washington's congressional
6 delegation.

7 WHEREAS, the gap between the pensions and retirement savings that American
8 households actually have and what they need in order to maintain their standard of
9 living was \$7.7 trillion as of 2013, and

10 WHEREAS, forty-seven percent of working-age families had nothing saved in
11 retirement accounts, and the median working-age family had only \$5,000 saved, as of
12 2013, and

13 WHEREAS, one in three American families had no savings at all, and 56.3
14 percent of Americans had less than \$1,000 in their checking and savings accounts, as of
15 2015, and

16 WHEREAS, as of 2011, only about half of United States workers participated in
17 a workplace retirement plan, and only ten percent of all private sector establishments
18 provided defined benefit plans, covering just eighteen percent of private industry
19 employees, and

20 WHEREAS, as of June 2015, Social Security retiree benefits averaged only
21 about \$1,300 per month, and among elderly Social Security beneficiaries, fifty-three
22 percent of married couples and seventy-four percent of unmarried persons received
23 most of their income from Social Security, and

24 WHEREAS, as of July 1, 2015, 12.4 percent of the King County population was
25 sixty-five years old and older, and 26.3 percent was between forty-five and sixty-four
26 years old, and

27 WHEREAS, people of color made up 32.3 percent of King County's population
28 in 2014, and among seniors sixty-five years old and older in 2012 Social Security was
29 the sole source of income for forty-three percent of Hispanics, thirty-seven percent of
30 African Americans and thirty-two percent of Asian and Pacific Islanders, compared to
31 twenty-two percent of whites, and

32 WHEREAS, as of April 1, 2015, women constituted 55.7 percent of King
33 County's population over sixty-five years old, and in 2013 the average annual Social
34 Security income received by women sixty-five years old and older was \$12,857,
35 compared with \$16,590 for men, and

36 WHEREAS, all wage earners who earn above the cap of \$118,500 pay no
37 payroll tax on all of their earnings above the cap, thereby paying an effective tax rate
38 lower than that of wage earners who earn less than the cap, and

39 WHEREAS, about ten percent of King Country residents did not have health
40 insurance as of 2014, and allowing younger people to buy into the Medicare program
41 would help address this significant problem, and

42 WHEREAS, while Medicare provides good health care benefits, it fails to cover
43 comprehensive hearing, vision, dental and most long-term care services;

44 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

45 A. Social Security benefits should be expanded to address the growing crisis of
46 financial insecurity among present and future Social Security recipients.

47 B. The cap on earnings that are subject to the Social Security payroll tax should
48 be eliminated to pay for the expansion of Social Security benefits.

49 C. The Medicare program should be expanded to make it possible for younger
50 people to be eligible.

51 D. Medicare benefits should be expanded to include comprehensive dental,
52 vision and hearing coverage, and the expansion should be funded by raising the Medicare
53 payroll tax from 1.45 percent to 2.00 percent.

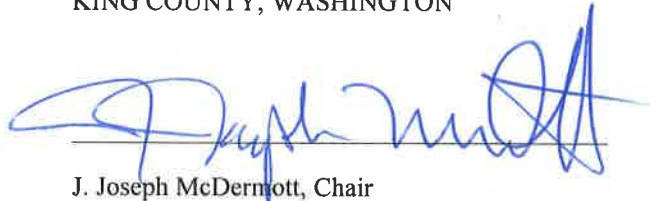
54 E. The clerk of the council is directed to send a copy of this motion to each
55 member of Washington's congressional delegation.

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Motion 14751 was introduced on 9/6/2016 and passed as amended by the Metropolitan King County Council on 10/17/2016, by the following vote:


Yes: 6 - Mr. Gossett, Mr. McDermott, Mr. Dembowski, Mr.
Upthegrove, Ms. Kohl-Welles and Ms. Balducci
No: 1 - Ms. Lambert
Excused: 2 - Mr. von Reichbauer and Mr. Dunn

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



J. Joseph McDermott, Chair

ATTEST:



Melani Pedroza, Acting Clerk of the Council

Attachments: None