

Resolution on the Contribution of the University to Staff/Faculty Health Insurance Costs (16/8)

- WHEREAS,** Health insurance coverage for health care is important to GW faculty and staff and their families as it assures access to quality health care services when they are faced with illness or injuries; and
- WHEREAS,** Comprehensive health insurance is important to protect against personal fiscal disaster as health services for serious illness and injuries, while effective and even lifesaving, can cost a patient thousands or even hundreds of thousands of dollars; and
- WHEREAS,** The US health insurance system is based on coverage provided by employers, especially large employers such as the University; and
- WHEREAS,** Over the past five years, the national average employee percentage share of employer health insurance costs has remained constant at 18% for individuals and 29% for families; and
- WHEREAS,** Over these five years, the national average increase in the employer contribution to employee health benefits has averaged approximately 5% per year; and
- WHEREAS,** Over these five years, GWU as an employer has limited the increase in its contribution to faculty health insurance costs to 3% in each year, resulting in an increase over this period in the GWU employee share of health insurance premium costs from an average of 25% to nearly 40% of the total premium costs; and
- WHEREAS,** Nationwide, the average 2015 annual employer premium contribution for single and family coverage is estimated to range between 68% and 84% of total premium costs, which is similar to the estimated range of employer percentage contributions in prior years; and
- WHEREAS,** A task force was selected and appointed by President Knapp in 2015 to review health insurance and other staff/faculty benefits; and
- WHEREAS,** The President's task force advised in December 2015 that a high deductible plan might be considered as an option, along with other health plans, because of the impact on GW of a new and soon to be implemented Federal health insurance excise tax, widely known as the "Cadillac tax"; and
- WHEREAS,** The implementation of the Federal health insurance Cadillac tax has now been delayed for two years with the bipartisan support of Congressional Republican and Democrat leadership and is widely expected to be repealed and never implemented;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE FACULTY SENATE OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

1. That the GWU contribution for health insurance costs, including premiums in 2017 and future years, should be no less than 75% of total health insurance costs;
2. That the necessary funds to increase future GWU contributions for health insurance benefits not be derived from reduction in covered health services, increased out-of-pocket health costs including deductibles and co-insurance, other staff/faculty compensation, other staff/faculty benefits, or academic activities;
3. That any planning for the expansion of the high deductible health plan should not replace or, as a consequence, disadvantage any of the other plans.

Submitted for Senate consideration by the Appointment, Salary, and Promotion Policy Committee
March 31, 2016

Adopted by the Faculty Senate
April 8, 2016