

STATEMENT ON CREATION OF HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY

Submitted By Council President Kenneth V. Cockrel, Jr., 6/09/04

Today a majority of the Detroit City Council voted to support the creation of the Detroit Wayne County Health Authority. I voted with the majority in support of this important initiative.

While the issue of whether or not to create such an authority has been the subject of much discussion and controversy for some time, I believe an authority is necessary. Creation of this authority will go a long way toward addressing Detroit's health care crisis by creating a primary care safety net for the uninsured and underinsured and by making more federal dollars available for health care services.

One particular concern of mine was the need for a strategy for creating more federally qualified health care clinics within Detroit and Wayne County. After much negotiation, the Mayor, the County Executive, and the Governor agreed to language that calls for such a strategy and the creation of such health clinics or similar health care "access points".

Also under consideration yesterday was a proposal to create a task force to monitor the actions of the authority. Though this proposal did pass, I voted "no". I believe a task force is unnecessary because the Council President, who will serve as our appointee to the authority, can do a sufficient job of keeping Council informed of the authority's activities.