



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS THE IMPACT OF FOR PROFIT URGENT CARE CENTERS ON NONPROFIT COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

- WHEREAS:** There has been an increase in the number of urgent care centers in and around the City of Boston, where these clinics offer walk in services for patients experiencing non-emergency medical issues such as common cold, small injuries, or minor infections; *and*
- WHEREAS:** While urgent care centers can offer convenient and quick care to patients, some of these clinics are for-profit, with investments from private equity firms and venture capital funds. Urgent care centers can be attractive investments because they do not have the legal obligations to treat patients if they do not have the ability to pay, unlike emergency department; *and*
- WHEREAS:** In addition to having no legal obligations to treat patients if they do not have the ability to pay, many urgent care centers do not accept Medicaid, which creates barrier to access for low income patients; *and*
- WHEREAS:** There are also concerns that patients are substituting visits with primary care providers with urgent care visits, and there is a lack of coordination and continuity of care between urgent care visits and primary care; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Some urgent care centers are in close proximity to community healthcare centers who provide similar services, which can threaten the financial viability of these invaluable neighborhood institutions; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Most recently, a for profit urgent care center is being proposed on West Broadway in South Boston, only a block away from the South Boston Community Health Center (SBCHC), which has provided critical, compassionate, and professional health care services in South Boston, servicing 70,000 visits per year that includes families, our seniors, persons with disabilities, immigrant neighbors, communities of color and our most vulnerable in public housing; *and*
- WHEREAS:** This proposal has the potential to negatively impact the community health center, as it can take away its patient base, especially when SBCHC plans to expand existing Urgent Care at their West Broadway facility to non-patients in the coming months, and has also opened another nearby urgent care clinic recently in the South Boston Waterfront that is available to non-patients; *and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:

That the appropriate Committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to discuss the for profit urgent care centers and their impacts on community health centers, their quality of care, and how they better improve access and collaboration with local health centers and hospitals. Representatives from the Boston Public Health Commission, local health centers, and urgent care centers, as well as other relevant and interested parties shall be invited to attend.