

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS SHARON DURKAN, BREADON, COLETTA ZAPATA, FITZGERALD, FLYNN, MEJIA, MURPHY, PEPÉN, SANTANA, WEBER AND LOUIJEUNE



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

EMERGENCY RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE HEALEY ADMINISTRATION TO PROTECT ACCESS TO LIFE-SAVING GLP-1 MEDICATION AND ESTABLISH A TASKFORCE OF EXPERTS

- WHEREAS,** GLP-1 medications are a class of drugs used to treat diabetes and obesity, a leading public health concern affecting more than 40% of adults contributing to comorbidities such as diabetes, hypertension, ventilatory dysfunction, and depression, increasing morbidity and mortality; *and*
- WHEREAS,** GLP-1 medications are one of the most effective clinical treatments for obesity available today, offering patients a medically supervised pathway to better health and reduced risk of chronic disease, and obesity disproportionately affects low-income communities and communities of color, who already face barriers to care that are compounded by stigma surrounding obesity and its treatment; *and*
- WHEREAS,** While GLP-1 medications are costly and usage has risen significantly in recent years, emerging studies suggest that these drugs can reduce related health care expenses, potentially slowing the growth of individual health care costs, and supporting that continued investment may yield long-term savings and health benefits; *and*
- WHEREAS,** In April 2025, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA), the largest insurer in the state, announced it would end coverage of GLP-1 medications for obesity treatment, effective January 2026, significantly limiting access for Boston residents who rely on this care; *and*
- WHEREAS,** BCBSMA administers two of the City of Boston's employee health plans, and coverage of GLP-1 medications for weight-loss will end for employees on these plans as of June 1, 2026. The City is currently evaluating its ability to independently cover these medications. This change will affect all three municipal health plans, putting access at risk for many city employees; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Last week, Governor Maura Healey announced a \$27.5 million reduction in budget funding alongside a directive to the State Health Insurance, Group Insurance Commission, to eliminate coverage of GLP-1 weight loss drugs for state employees unless medically necessary, restricting access to over 400,000 state workers and their families; *and*

WHEREAS, The Group Insurance Commission's next meeting is in September. Massachusetts is a global leader in healthcare, biomedical innovation, and public health research, and should lead on equitable solutions to chronic disease management, rather than retreating from coverage based on short-term cost concerns; *and*

WHEREAS, The Governor's directive to the Group Insurance Commission to eliminate coverage of GLP-1 medications for weight loss would significantly restrict access for over 400,000 public employees and their families, and the Boston City Council urges the legislature override the Governor's veto and directive in order to protect equitable access to life-saving care and allow for a thoughtful conversation to play out; *and*

WHEREAS, Given the severity of this crisis the City of Boston urges the Commonwealth to consider the impact of these decisions and advocate to ensure that all residents, particularly low-income individuals and those living with chronic illness, have access to these life-changing medical treatments; *and*

WHEREAS, Due to the far-reaching public impact of recent decisions to restrict access to GLP-1 medications, there is a clear and immediate need for the Governor to establish a statewide Taskforce to guide policy on this issue; *and*

WHEREAS, A statewide Taskforce would provide a structured, evidence-based forum to examine these questions thoroughly and responsibly, informed by medical research, public health data, and the lived experiences of patients; *and*

WHEREAS, The Taskforce should include public health experts, primary care physicians, representatives from insurance companies, health care economists, business leaders and individuals currently benefiting from GLP-1 medications, to ensure a well-rounded understanding of the implications of these treatments; *and*

WHEREAS, Due to the urgent need for immediate action in response to unforeseen circumstances impacting the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Boston, an emergency declaration is hereby necessary to expedite the filing and consideration of this order; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED: That the Boston City Council files an emergency resolution urging Governor Maura Healey and her administration to establish a statewide GLP-1 Taskforce to evaluate the clinical and economic impacts of GLP-1 coverage and identify the populations most affected by access restrictions in order to make policy recommendations to ensure equitable access to care; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED: That the Boston City Council calls upon the Massachusetts Legislature to reject the Governor's directive until this task force is established.

Filed: July 9, 2025