



Jackie Goldberg
Councilmember, 13th District

City Co.
of the
City of Los Angeles
City Hall
90012

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 15, 1993

Contact: Veronica Gutierrez
(213)485-3353

JACKIE GOLDBERG GETS CITY ENDORSEMENT OF
LEAGUE OF CITIES' RESOLUTION IN FAVOR OF
DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

Councilmember Jackie Goldberg, 13th District, introduced a motion today before the Los Angeles City Council to have the City of Los Angeles approve a League of Cities resolution in favor of domestic partnership health insurance coverage.

Councilmember Goldberg's motion, which passed unanimously, was made when the Council considered a report by its Intergovernmental Relations Committee endorsing numerous resolutions by the League of Cities Annual Conference in San Francisco on October 17-19, 1993.

"This is an important step toward improving health care for unmarried couples, some with children," said Goldberg, who has been studying the options for domestic partnership coverage for City employees. "Also benefitting would be gay and lesbian couples who have no other way of obtaining family coverage."

Councilmember Goldberg, who chairs the City Council's Personnel Committee, will be advancing domestic partnership legislation for the City of Los Angeles.

14. **RESOLUTION RELATING TO DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE**

Source: City of West Hollywood
Referred to: Committee on Employee Relations
Preliminary Recommendation to Resolutions Committee: _____
Final Recommendation to Resolutions Committee: _____

WHEREAS, the California Insurance Commissioner has called for insurers to end discrimination based on marital status and extend health insurance to domestic partners of employees on the same terms that is made available to other dependents; and

WHEREAS, there are currently estimated to be at least 4.2 million households in the United States made up of unmarried couples, some with children; and

WHEREAS, domestic partner status is recognized by at least 136 major employers, including 53 public agencies, of which 16 are California counties, cities or special districts, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Berkeley, Laguna Beach, and West Hollywood; and

WHEREAS, claims and other costs associated with health insurance of domestic partners are as low or lower than that of other categories of employee dependents within those agencies, which currently provide such insurance; and

WHEREAS, many California public agencies participate in the PERS health care program for provision of group health care benefits; and

WHEREAS, at least five medical care providers currently contracting with the PERS health care program recognize and provide coverage for recognized domestic partners in subscribing employee group health programs; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by the General Assembly of the League of California Cities assembled in Annual Conference in San Francisco, October 19, 1993, that the League support legislation amending the Public Employees Medical Health Care Act; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the League urge the PERS Board of Directors to amend the PERS health care program to allow for domestic partnership health insurance coverage for those contracting agencies that wish to obtain this option for their employees, under the same terms applicable to other employee dependents.

14. RESOLUTION RELATING TO DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

Source: City of West Hollywood

Summary:

This Resolution would support efforts to have the health insurance coverage available to public employees extended to include the domestic partner of an employee in the same manner as is provided the spouse of a married employee.

Comment:

The Committee on Employee Relations recommended that this Resolution be referred to the appropriate policy committee for study.

The proposed legislation only deals with PERS ("Public Employees Retirement System") and would not impact the City.

Recommendation: No Position

15. RESOLUTION RELATING TO TIMBERLAND ACQUISITION

Source: Redwood Empire Division

Summary:

This Resolution would have the League oppose a proposal advanced by Congressmen Hamburg and Stark that the federal government take 45,000 of commercial timberland, most of which is owned by Pacific Lumber Company.

Comment:

This Resolution was referred to two committees. The Environmental Quality Committee will make a recommendation at its October 17 meeting. The Committee on Housing, Community and Economic Development recommended disapproval. It appears to be essentially a northern California issue and would have no impact on the City.

Recommendation: No position

16. RESOLUTION RELATING TO PROTECTION OF OPEN SPACE

Source: Recreation, Parks, and Community Services Department

ENCINO**Roberti Calls Strategy Session on School Breakup**

With efforts to break up the Los Angeles Unified School District seemingly on hold, State Sen. David A. Roberti (D-Van Nuys) assembled a group of San Fernando Valley legislators Friday for a strategy session aimed at getting the issue moving again.

Roberti said the group of state and local legislators, including state Sen. Cathie Wright (R-Simi Valley) and Assemblywomen Barbara Friedman (D-North Hollywood) and Paula L. Boland (R-Granada Hills), pledged between \$30,000 and \$40,000 to push the breakup of the 640,000-student district but did not decide on what route to take. The group will meet again next week.

Breakup bills introduced by Roberti and Boland failed to win enough support this year for passage. Those bills could become the vehicle for downsizing the district, or the legislators could decide to go directly to voters with a measure on the November, 1994, ballot. The group also could decide to ask the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors or the State

Board of Education to split up the vast district.

LOS ANGELES**State Urged to Offer Health Plans to Unmarried Couples**

The Los Angeles City Council joined several other cities Friday in urging the state Public Employees Retirement System to grant health insurance coverage to the unmarried partners of public employees.

The motion by Councilwoman Jackie Goldberg was approved unanimously in anticipation of next week's League of Cities annual conference in San Francisco. Goldberg, the city's first openly gay elected official, is working on legislation that would grant health insurance and other benefits to the partners of unmarried Los Angeles city employees.

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JACKIE GOLDBERG

PRESS RELEASE
November 16, 1993

Contact: Veronica Gutierrez
(213)485-3353

NEWS

JACKIE GOLDBERG INTRODUCES LANDMARK DOMESTIC PARTNER LEGISLATION

Councilmember Jackie Goldberg, 13th District, today introduced landmark legislation to extend health benefits to domestic partners of City of Los Angeles employees.

"It is time that Los Angeles join the ranks of other major cities in providing a real opportunity for decent health care to people who may not have coverage elsewhere," said Goldberg, referring to similar legislation in effect in 19 other municipalities, including the cities of San Francisco, Seattle, Atlanta, Minneapolis, Berkeley, Oakland, and West Hollywood, as well as King County, Washington, San Mateo County, and Santa Cruz County. Los Angeles County will begin dental coverage in 1994.

Councilmember Goldberg's motion, seconded by Councilmembers Zev Yaroslavsky and Richard Alarcon, if approved, will institute a policy of including domestic partners and their children in the definition of "immediate family" for access to the City's family health and dental care group benefit plans. It will require domestic partners to register with the City as is currently done through the confidential affidavit used by the Personnel Department for allowance of sick leave and bereavement leave.

"This is an issue of fairness and humanity for unmarried and same-sex couples and their families," explained Goldberg. "The time has come for us to go beyond lip service recognition of nontraditional families," she declared. "We cannot say, 'Yes, you are a family, but we will not treat you as one.' It is important that we take this step if we really mean it when we say that nontraditional family relationships are valid ones" she added.

In materials provided by Councilmember Goldberg, she cited a 1987 survey indicating that 4.2% of the City work force, excluding the Department of Water and Power (DWP), lived with a domestic partner. According to a national survey, 1.3% of employees of large municipal employers are enrolled as domestic partners in group health plans. Using this percentage, 291 civilian employees are expected to enroll a domestic partner in a City plan, for an estimated cost of \$524,160. If extended to fire and police sworn employees, the City subsidy would cost an additional \$234,000. The total cost to the DWP would be \$257,000.

The motion is expected to be considered by the Executive Employee Relations Committee, and the Joint Labor-Management Benefits Committee before returning to the City Council for a vote.

(Motion attached)

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FORM GEN. 160 (Rev. 8-80)

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: November 12, 1993

To: Honorable Jackie Goldberg
Councilmember, 13th District

From: Henry W. Hurd, Employee Benefits Administrator
Personnel Department

Subject: HEALTH SUBSIDY FOR DOMESTIC PARTNERS

A 1987 survey of the City's civilian labor force, excluding the Department of Water and Power, indicated that 59.7% of the employees surveyed were married and that 4.2% lived with a domestic partner. Annual subsidy for spousal coverage is \$21.6 million or 22.4% of total annual civilian subsidy expenditures (excluding the Department of Water and Power).

We have furnished an estimate of the cost of providing health subsidy to domestic partners based on results of the 1987 survey, current City health plan enrollment, and the results of a national survey by an independent consultant. According to the national survey, 1.3% of employees of large municipal employers had enrolled domestic partners in the employer's group health plans. Using this percentage, we estimate that 291 civilian employees would enroll a domestic partner in a City health plan. The annual cost of providing health subsidy to this group would be \$524,160. If domestic partner health subsidy was extended to fire and police sworn employees, there would be an additional cost of \$234,000. The total City cost (excluding the Department of Water and Power) under this scenario would be \$758,160. We estimate that the annual cost to the Department of Water and Power of providing a domestic partner health subsidy would be \$257,400.

We believe the 1.3% estimate is the most likely in Los Angeles. First, the subsidy provided for a domestic partner is a taxable benefit to the employee. Second, we do not believe that all employees who indicated that they live with a domestic partner will meet the City's definition of a domestic partner. Finally, a study conducted by Hewitt Associates for Levi Strauss found that on a national basis fewer than 2% of workers have signed up for domestic partner benefits when those benefits were made available.

If you have any questions, please call me at extension 5-2048.

HWH:LJR

**FACTS CONCERNING THE CITY'S WORKFORCE
POTENTIAL DOMESTIC PARTNER LIABILITY**

Breakdown of City Workforce

City Civilian	22,400
Sworn Fire	2,600
Sworn Police	7,400
DWP	<u>11,000</u>
Total	43,400

Percent of Civilian Workforce With Domestic Partners Per 1987 Survey 4.2%

Average Cost of City's Contribution For Spouses' Medical Benefits \$150/month x 12 months = \$1,800/year

Assumption: 1.3 percent of workforce would enroll a domestic partner in a medical plan (based on national survey by independent consultant).

Annual Cost to City For Civilian (non-DWP) Employees Who Enroll a Domestic Partner For Health Benefits $1.3\% \times 22,400 \times \$1,800 = \$524,160$

Annual Cost to City For Sworn Fire and Police Employees Who Enroll a Domestic Partner For Health Benefits $1.3\% \times 10,000 \times \$1,800 = \underline{\$234,000}$

Total City Cost \$758,160

Annual Cost to DWP For DWP Employees Who Enroll a Domestic Partner For Health Benefits $1.3\% \times 11,000 \times \$1,800 = \$257,400$

Goldberg to Seek Benefits for Unmarried Partners

■ **Rights:** Proposal would allow city workers who have lived with their mates for at least one year to obtain insurance for them and their dependents.

By JAMES RAINEY
TIMES STAFF WRITER

Calling it "a matter of simple equity," Los Angeles City Councilwoman Jackie Goldberg plans today to propose a policy that would grant unmarried domestic partners of city employees the same health benefits that husbands and wives now receive.

Goldberg's proposal would allow city workers who have lived with a partner for at least a year to register with the city to obtain medical and dental benefits for the

partner and his or her dependent children.

The law would apply to heterosexual and homosexual couples.

The first-year councilwoman said she became aware that only married couples were eligible for benefits when she received her benefit application package and found no place to enroll her long-time partner.

"The city should be a model of non-discriminatory practices," Goldberg said. "We should lead. I was surprised when I got here that this was not already done."

A 1987 city survey found that 4.2% of city employees live with partners they are not married to. National surveys have found that only about 1% of eligible municipal employees apply for domestic partner benefits, according to a study by the city Personnel Department.

In Los Angeles, that would mean

about 520 employees would take advantage of the policy, at a cost of just over \$1 million a year.

City Councilman Zev Yaroslavsky, who plans to second the proposal, said the city must proceed regardless of the cost.

"It's something that is right and sound public policy," he said. "We have a number of employees who are not married but who have partners and their relationships are every bit as important to them. The time has come to recognize these individuals as families with hopes and aspirations just like everyone else's."

Neither Goldberg nor Yaroslavsky has identified a source of funding for the proposal.

If it approves the health benefits, Los Angeles will join several other cities, including San Francisco, Berkeley, Minneapolis, Atlanta and Seattle.

Los Angeles County last summer extended dental benefits to domestic partners.

The city of Los Angeles in 1989 took a first step toward recognizing unmarried couples when it granted bereavement and sick leave to domestic partners. So far, six of about 40 city employee unions have signed up. Of 14,000 employees in those unions, about 20 couples have registered with the city for sick time and bereavement benefits.

Goldberg, the first openly gay City Council member, said the medical benefits proposal is the first she has made that will specifically benefit gays and lesbians.

But she said that heterosexuals are more likely to benefit.

"In the cities where it has been done, opposite-sex couples have benefited more. There are just more of them," Goldberg said.

Benefits for Unmarried Partners Lauded

■ **Health:** Measure would extend medical and dental coverage to domestic partners of city employees. Proponents say cost will be negligible.

By BETTINA BOXALL
TIMES STAFF WRITER

Ingrid Herda may not have any immediate plans to marry her partner, but she would like him to have the same health coverage as she does.

So she was pleased when three Los Angeles City Council members introduced an ordinance Tuesday that would extend medical benefits to the unmarried domestic partners of city employees—both heterosexual and gay.

"I've been waiting for this," said Herda, a management analyst in the city's Bureau of Sanitation. She sees no reason her partner should not be eligible for the same benefits provided to the spouses of her married co-workers. "Just because I choose to live with someone and not marry them—if we're sharing everything in the household, it's a partnership. . . . I don't see that big a difference other than a piece of paper that makes one relationship legal and one not."

The proposal, authored by Councilwoman Jackie Goldberg and seconded by Councilmen Zev Yaroslavsky and Richard Alarcon, would allow city employees who have lived with domestic partners for at least a year to obtain medical and dental coverage for them and any dependent children.

"We think it's a small amount of money but a large step forward,"

said Goldberg, the first openly gay member of the council.

Based on the experience of other cities that have adopted similar programs, proponents expect about 1% of the city employees to sign up for the extended benefits. That would add about \$758,000 to the \$21.6 million the city spends annually on spousal benefits (excluding the Department of Water and Power). A 1987 survey indicated that 4.2% of the city civilian work force lived with an unmarried partner.

Although Mayor Richard Riordan says he wants to study the proposal before taking a position, Council President John Ferraro says he expects the measure to pass. "We found out it's a lifestyle that's rather prevalent and I don't think we can ignore it," he said of unmarried couples. "I don't think there's any doubt it will pass."

Saying he would support Goldberg's proposal, Councilman Rudy Svorinich Jr. commented: "I don't think the government needs to tell me who I should have my medical benefits cover. . . . This is an issue of health care, not an issue of domestic preference."

The city has offered sick and bereavement leave to workers with domestic partners for several years, but a number of unions representing city employees have not written the benefit into their contracts. Henry W. Hurd, the city's employee benefits administrator, says only about nine couples—two-thirds of them gay—have signed up for the leave.

Around the country, there is a slowly emerging trend of cities and private corporations extending benefits to unmarried partners, usually both gay and heterosexual. Surveys indicate that a relatively

small percentage take advantage of the programs and that the majority of participants are usually heterosexual.

In Laguna Beach, which has offered medical benefits to domestic partners since 1990, 18 of about 200 city employees have signed up, according to the personnel department. Only one was gay. "We haven't noticed any significant change in our claims experience," said an employee.

In Seattle, where fewer than 5% of the city's 10,000 employees have opted for partner benefits, the program has increased medical insurance costs by about 1% annually. Again, most of those participating (67%) are heterosexual.

"It's certainly not an issue in the city anymore and it was front-page news for a year," said Sally Fox, the city's benefit manager. "It's spreading and people are accepting it."

If the benefits package is adopted in Los Angeles, local union representatives predicted, the response would be similarly restrained.

"My sense, from talking to my members and other people, is that there's not going to be a huge amount of people who would sign up for it," said Michelle Buehler of Local 347 of the Service Employees International Union, which represents about 6,500 city workers, mostly blue collar.

John Wyrrough, executive director of Council 36 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, said workers are still reluctant to reveal their personal relationships to their bosses, regardless of their sexual orientation. Further, he said, in many couples, both partners work and have their own insurance coverage.

Los Angeles Times

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1993

LOS ANGELES

Benefits for Unmarried Partners OK'd by Council

In a decision applauded by gay and lesbian organizations, the Los Angeles City Council on Tuesday joined a growing number of cities in offering health and dental benefits to unmarried domestic partners.

The new benefits, pushed by Councilwoman Jackie Goldberg as a fairness issue, will apply to heterosexual and homosexual partners and are the same benefits offered to the spouses of married employees.

Officials estimate that less than 2% of the city's employees will apply for the benefits, at an estimated cost to the city of \$758,000. The annual cost at the Department of Water and Power would be an additional \$250,000.

The city already pays \$21.6 million on spousal benefits.

Council members Rudy Svorinich Jr., Laura Chick and Hal Bernson voted against the measure, arguing that the financial implications ought to be reviewed further.