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News Release

Commissioners Discontinue Their Health Insurance Benefits

February 19, 2013, Monroe, NC – The Union County Board of Commissioners has unanimously voted to eliminate health insurance coverage for current commissioners and future commissioners.

For a number of years, Union County has maintained a health insurance plan for the benefit of current employees and sitting commissioners. The current insurance plan and related documents provide coverage for sitting members of the board and also provides options for dependent coverage. This benefit was in effect when all current commissioners were elected to the board, and paid health insurance coverage is part of each commissioner's compensation package.

North Carolina General Statute 153A-92(b) limits the board's ability to reduce compensation for sitting commissioners. However, the board can limit the benefit if an individual commissioner consents.

In order to make any reduction or elimination of health insurance benefits for future commissioners, General Statute 153A-92(b)(2) allows the board to pass a resolution reducing or eliminating the benefit no later than 14 days before the last day of filing for candidacy for the office of Union County Board of Commissioners.

“Every year our county departments have to find ways to make ends meet with the money they are allowed to have,” said Commissioner Todd Johnson. “So, it's hard for me to tell any department to cut their budget if we aren't willing to let the cuts start with us.”

“We are part-time employees, and there is no other part-time employee in the county that is eligible for health insurance,” said Commissioner Richard Helms. “We need to set the example and start making cuts with us.”

Based on current fiscal year insurance estimates, the financial impact of this change will be a net reduction in next fiscal year's general fund budget of between \$7,812 and \$13,620 for each commissioner. The range reflects different insurance plan options available and the associated annual budget estimate associated with those options.

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