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The
National
Managed
Health Care
Congress
NMHCC

March 12, 1992

Barrie Tron, Director of Public Events & Initiatives
1780EOB
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Tron:

Many thanks for talking with me about having the President provide a video-taped introduction to the National Managed Health Care Congress.

As we discussed, I want to draw attention to the recent polls that shows up to 70% dissatisfaction with the President's health care policy. I think this is in part because that policy may be misunderstood.

There is absolutely no audience in America that is more motivated to understand the President's health policy and that is willing to communicate it clearly to the public than the National Managed Health Care Congress. It might be a seriously missed opportunity if we did not encourage the President to go beyond a normal introduction and to explain some of the key components and goals of this policy to this group, making a straight-forward appeal to them for their help by showing them how that policy might be in the interest of everyone.

I have enclosed a very rough draft of what such an appeal might look like.

Sincerely,



Vidar J. Jorgensen, Managing Director

Enclosure (a/s)

P 202-456-2421
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cl29/0307.01/vj

Possible Welcome Address for NMHCC By President George Bush

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have a special reason for welcoming the National Managed Health Care Congress to Washington, D.C., for your annual meeting.

The health care industry in the United States has a significance that goes far beyond its very large portion of the gross national product and its role as one of the nation's largest and most rapidly growing employers. You all know the size and projected growth of the nation's health care expenditures, so there is no need for me to reiterate those facts. I will instead challenge you to join me in working together to realize the potential of America health care in two crucial areas:

- I. As a model of successful free enterprise leadership domestically and in world trade.
- II. As a symbol of America's ability to balance liberty with equality of opportunity; freedom to choose with broad access to quality care.

At a time when most countries of the world are moving dramatically away from government controls and ownership, it is ironic that this nation is engaged in an increasingly loud debate as to whether the provision of health care is best done primarily on a private and free market basis, or on a government-controlled basis.

No country in the world has successfully managed to provide cost-effective, quality health care to all its citizens, primarily on a free market basis. It can be done, and America can do it. We are able to provide other vital human necessities such as food, shelter and clothing on a free market basis, but some people feel that somehow this cannot be accomplished with health care. America has already gone too far in the direction of forcing education into government-monopolized programs, and there are a lot of people, myself included, who want to give people choice in education and health care.

After all, this country's greatness is built in part on expanding the opportunities for individual choice. We would lose a lot of the vitality and initiative of our health care system if it were more tightly controlled by the government. An enormous responsibility goes with that freedom, however, and most of it falls onto the shoulders of you in this room today.

If we want to continue providing health care primarily on a free market basis, then there is no time for complacency. We are approaching a critical decision point. We have to demonstrate and communicate the benefits of freedom of choice clearly to the public and to demonstrate that we can do what needs to be done under such a system.

The accomplishments of the American health care system are enormous. We lead the world in pharmaceutical and technological discoveries. American health care is the best in the world by far. There are also some improvements that we must address. We know them well:

- I. Providing adequate health care access for the under-insured.
- II. Making sure that we are providing appropriate quality health care at a cost that is affordable and competitive with the rest of the world. America's leadership in pharmaceuticals and health care technology already provides for world export opportunities. We need to ensure that the cost of health care does not put American exporters at a disadvantage in the global economy.

What is at stake in solving our health care crisis is not only a large and growing component of our economy, but also crucial areas of technological, management and social leadership. We must also maintain our leadership as a nation of liberty and equality of opportunity -- a nation that ultimately can be judged by the world on the basis of how effectively we provide health care to the least advantaged of our citizens.

I have developed a health care policy that enables America to meet these objectives, while preserving free market choices. The vital component that will either make or break our success is you. The experience, talent and resources represented by this audience can meet these challenges and communicate the benefits of a free market system to the broader American public. We need to do it quickly.

So, I welcome you to Washington, D.C., for the National Managed Health Care Congress; and I hope that, as you meet, you always remember the larger mission that we need to accomplish together. A lot depends on you.

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 19, 1992

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Editors: Drew Altman, President of the Kaiser Family Foundation, and Robert Blendon are available for comment and analysis at 617-432-4502 or 617-432-1310.

HEALTH REFORM NUMBER 2 ISSUE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

Voters Favor Government Guarantee of Universal Access

MENLO PARK, CA -- A poll of New Hampshire voters who participated in the Presidential primary shows that the recession and overall concern for the economy were the most important factors in determining the outcome of the election. Health care and national health insurance ranked second among all New Hampshire voters, Republicans and Democrats alike. Concerns over health care significantly outranked concerns over all other issues. Health care outranked taxes by a factor of 2 to 1 and education by 4 to 1. Throughout all the poll results, the issue of health care reform was more salient among Democratic voters than among Republicans.

"Combined with the poll we conducted in Pennsylvania following last fall's special election for the Senate, these results confirm the staying power of health care as a domestic political issue. After the recession and the future of the economy, health care reform has become the voters' top concern," said Kaiser Foundation President Drew Altman. "The poll says that people want action and they want it from the federal government."

When presented with the leading policy options for health care reform, 52 percent of New Hampshire voters favored a health plan which would guarantee universal coverage by law--28 percent supported a "play or pay" plan like those proposed by Senator Tsongas and Governor Clinton; 24 percent favored an all government plan similar to those of Governor Brown and Senators Kerrey and Harkin. Another 29 percent of voters supported a tax credit plan like that offered by President Bush.

However, even though a majority of voters in New Hampshire favored universal coverage guaranteed by law, a majority (52 percent) also favored plans which would make insurance available through private insurers rather than through an all-government plan.

New Hampshire voters were divided about how to control health care costs. Forty-three percent favored a plan that would encourage more competition by providing financial incentives like that proposed by Senator Tsongas and President Bush.

Another 37 percent favor a plan in which government would set fees charged by doctors and hospitals, like those proposed by Kerrey, Clinton and Harkin.

(more)

"New Hampshire voters clearly favored a government guarantee of universal health insurance coverage, but are divided on what type of plan they want," said Robert Blendon, Chairman of the Department of Health Policy and Management at the Harvard School of Public Health. "Voters also favored government action to control health care costs, but were divided on whether a market or regulatory strategy should be used."

Asked whether they would be willing to pay additional taxes beyond their health insurance premium to support a national health plan that would provide universal coverage, 53 percent of voters responded affirmatively. Thirty-seven percent of voters said they would pay \$240 or more annually--this would produce approximately \$20 billion to fund a national health plan. 8 percent would pay something less than \$240 per year, while 47 percent would not pay any additional taxes.

No candidate's position on health care appears to have made a significant impression on New Hampshire voters. When asked who would do the most to respond to the problem of providing affordable health care to all Americans, Senator Kerrey led with 17 percent among voters, followed by Senator Tsongas at 10 percent. Governor Clinton with 8 percent. President Bush with 7 percent, and Pat Buchanan, Senator Harkin and Governor Brown with 4 percent each. However, 39 percent of New Hampshire voters answer "do not know," they were unsure which candidate would be the best for health reform.

New Hampshire voters also expressed disapproval of President Bush's handling of the health care issue--a 70 percent disapproval rating.

Looking ahead to the general election in November, 69 percent of New Hampshire voters said that a candidate's position on health care will be one of several important factors likely to influence their vote.

The Kaiser/Harvard/KRC poll, supported by the Kaiser Family Foundation, was designed by Robert J. Blendon, Chairman of the Department of Health Policy and Management, and Ulrike Szalay, Deputy Director of the Program on Public Opinion and Health Care of the Harvard School of Public Health. The poll was conducted by KRC Communications Research in Newton, Massachusetts. KRC is a national survey organization which routinely conducts polls for the Boston Globe, and the Westinghouse chain of television stations. Partial results of the random sample survey are attached and a complete analysis will be released in the near future.

Methodology

The results are based on telephone interviews with a randomly selected sample of 1,001 New Hampshire voters; specifically, 513 Democratic primary voters and 488 Republican primary voters, ages 18 and over. The poll was conducted on February 18, 1992. For results based samples of this size, one can say with 95 percent confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be ± 3 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, the lack of response by some voters to certain post-primary questions can introduce error into the poll results. For example, not all voters were prepared to identify for which candidates they had voted in the primary.

The Kaiser Family Foundation is a private health care philanthropy and is not associated with Kaiser Permanente or Kaiser Industries.

NEW HAMPSHIRE, HEALTH CARE AND THE 1992 ELECTION

HOW DID NEW HAMPSHIRE VOTERS VOTE?

Q. Did you vote in today's presidential primary? (IF YES:) In which presidential primary did you vote...in the Republican primary, or in the Democratic primary?

and...

In the [RELEVANT PARTY] presidential primary the major candidates on the ballot were [LIST CANDIDATES]: For whom did you vote in the [RELEVANT PARTY] primary ?

(Note: 49% of voters sampled voted in the Republican primary, and 51% voted in the Democratic primary)

REPUBLICAN PRIMARY

	Actual Returns (99% reporting)	Harvard/KRC
Buchanan	40%	43%
Bush	58%	55%
Other	2%	2%

DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY

	Actual Returns (99% reporting)	Harvard/KRC
Brown	9%	9%
Clinton	26%	26%
Harkin	10%	10%
Kerrey	12%	12%
Tsongas	34%	34%
Cuomo (vol.)	5%	3%
Other	4%	6%

WHICH TWO ISSUES MATTERED MOST TO NH VOTERS—AND WHICH WAS MOST IMPORTANT?

Q. [OPEN-ENDED/PRE-CODED] Which two issues mattered most in deciding how you voted the presidential primary?

THE TOP TWO....

	All NH Primary Voters	Democratic primary voters	Republican primary voters
Economy/recession/jobs/unemployment	61%	62%	59%
Health care/national health insurance	39%	48%	31%
Taxes	15%	12%	18%
Education	10%	11%	10%

THE MOST IMPORTANT...

Q. [OPEN-ENDED/PRE-CODED] Of the issues you just mentioned, which would you say mattered MOST in deciding how you voted in the presidential primary?

	All NH Primary Voters	Democratic primary voters	Republican primary voters
Economy/recession jobs/unemployment	42%	42%	41%
Health care/national health insurance	14%	20%	8%
Taxes	4%	3%	8%

WHAT APPROACH TO PROVIDING AND FINANCING HEALTH CARE WOULD NEW HAMPSHIRE VOTERS FAVOR.... ?

Q. Which of the following four approaches to PROVIDING health care would you favor?

	All NH Primary Voters	Democratic primary voters	Republican primary voters
1. Play-or-pay	28%	32%	25%
2. All government	24%	30%	18%
3. Tax Credits	29%	25%	34%
4. Leave things the way they are	9%	5%	12%
DK/Refused	10%	8%	11%

1. A national health plan in which businesses are required either to offer private health insurance for their employees or contribute to a government program that would cover them. Those who are unemployed or work part-time would be enrolled in the same government program financed by taxpayers. [PLAY OR PAY]

-or-

2. A national health plan financed by taxpayers, in which Americans would get their insurance from a single government plan. [NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE]

-or-

3. A national plan which would offer lower income uninsured Americans an income tax credit, and middle income Americans an income tax deduction to help them purchase private health insurance. [TAX CREDITS]

-or-

4. Leaving things the way they are

None of these
DK/Refused

Q. Which of the following four approaches to CONTROLLING HEALTH CARE COSTS would you favor?

	All NH Primary Voters	Democratic primary voters	Republican primary voters
Government setting fees charged by doctors and hospitals.	37%	37%	36%
Government encourages more competition in health care by providing financial incentives to individuals and businesses to enroll in less costly health care plans.	43%	44%	41%
Leaving things the way they are	9%	7%	11%
DK/Refused	11%	12%	11%

WHAT DO NH VOTERS WORRY ABOUT MOST WHEN IT COMES TO HEALTH CARE COSTS?

Q. I will read you a list of things that people sometimes worry about when it comes to health care costs. Please say for each one if it is something you worry about a great deal, quite a lot, not much or not at all?

(ALL NEW HAMPSHIRE PRIMARY VOTERS)	A Great Deal	Quite a Lot	Not Much	Not at all	Not Sure
<i>COST ISSUES</i>					
a. Having to pay very expensive medical bills which are not covered by health insurance	48%	23%	17%	11%	2%
b. That you will have to pay a much larger premium for your current health care plan	42%	31%	14%	10%	3%
c. That your out-of-pocket costs for medical bills will increase rapidly over the next few years	43%	30%	16%	8%	3%
<i>COVERAGE ISSUES (Being uninsured or underinsured)</i>					
d. Losing health insurance coverage which you have now	40%	20%	19%	18%	4%
e. That the benefits under your current health care plan will be cut back substantially	38%	29%	17%	14%	1%

NEW HAMPSHIRE VOTERS ASSESS THE NATION'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Q. Which of the following comes closest to expressing your overall view of the health care system in this country...?

	Louis Harris national (6/91)	Harvard/KRC: All NH Primary Voters	Dem. primary voters	Rep. primary voters
On the whole, the health care system works pretty well, and only minor changes are necessary to make it work better	12%	9%	4%	15%
There are some good things in our health care system, but fundamental changes are needed to make it work better	52%	42%	38%	45%
The American health care system has so much wrong with it that we need to completely rebuild it	35%	45%	53%	37%
DK/Refused	1%	4%	5%	3%

WHAT WOULD THEY PAY TO CHANGE THE PRESENT SYSTEM?

Q. Would you be willing to pay additional taxes beyond your current health insurance premium to support a national health plan that would provide insurance coverage for all Americans? (IF YES): How much more money per month would you be willing to pay?

	All NH Primary Voters	Democratic Primary Voters	Republican Primary Voters
Said yes	53%	60%	46%
\$100	13%	17%	9%
\$50	12%	14%	11%
\$20	12%	14%	9%
Less than \$20	8%	9%	10%
Don't know	8%	6%	7%

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE GENERAL ELECTION...WHERE WILL HEALTH CARE RANK AMONG VOTERS' CONCERNS?

Q. In the general election for president in November, how much will your vote be influenced by the candidate's position on health care? will it be the single most important issue, will it be one of several important issues, or will it not influence your vote very much at all?

	All NH Primary voters	Democratic primary voters	Republican primary voters
Single most important issue	7%	8%	6%
One of several important issues	69%	74%	63%
Not at all important	20%	12%	28%
DK/Refused	4%	5%	3%

WHICH CANDIDATE BEST ADDRESSED HEALTH CARE?

Q. Regardless of how you voted in the primary, which of the candidates do you think would do most to respond to the problem of providing affordable health care for all Americans?

	All NH Primary Voters	Democratic primary voters	Republican primary voters
Brown	4%	5%	2%
Buchanan	4%	2%	7%
Bush	7%	3%	12%
Clinton	8%	11%	6%
Harkin	4%	7%	2%
Kerrey	17%	18%	15%
Tsongas	10%	12%	8%
DK	39%	34%	45%

...AND FINALLY, HOW DO NH VOTERS FEEL THE PRESIDENT IS HANDLING THESE ISSUES TWO WEEKS AFTER HIS HEALTH PROPOSALS WERE ANNOUNCED

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George Bush is handling the problem of providing affordable health care for all Americans?

	CBS/NYT Nat'l (8/91)	All NH Primary Voters	Democratic primary voters	Republican primary voters
Approve	23%	17%	8%	27%
Disapprove	62%	70%	83%	56%
DK/Refused	15%	17%	9%	17%