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**Folder Title:**

Fall

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July 23, 1993

MEMORANDUM FOR MARK GEARAN  
DAVID GERGEN  
GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS

FROM: JEFF ELLER *JE*

RE: Health Care Communications

As you review the options discussed in the Roosevelt Room concerning Health Care and NAFTA, I would like you to review the past public statements by the President concerning Health Care and NAFTA.

Meeghan Prunty of the Communications Research office has compiled this very compelling material.

Television stations throughout the country, just like politicians, do polling, market research and focus groups. Throughout this week, I've had conversations with some former colleagues of mine in local television.

Television consultants are telling their clients that people want more information and stories on health care.

This gives us a medium pre-disposed to cover our story.

I have stacks and stacks of requests for town hall meetings, series, and individuals interviews/stories on health care.

There is no hue and cry for NAFTA.

Please read through this material.

*- start a file*

*Fall 1993*

*"In the first year of a Clinton-Gore Administration . . .  
We will send a national health-care plan to Congress  
and we will fight to pass it."*

[Putting People First, p. 108]

## **HEALTH CARE FIRST PRIORITY: PRESIDENT CLINTON STATEMENTS**

### **CAMPAIGN HEALTH CARE POSITION PAPER**

- "During the first year of my administration, we'll send a national health plan to Congress. We will make sure that every American has access to quality, affordable health care." [7/92]

### **CAMPAIGN SPEECHES**

- "In the first 100 days of our administration, Al Gore and I will send to the United States Congress and attempt to pass a program ... with a plan for comprehensive, affordable health care for every citizen in this country as a right, not a privilege." [American Nurses Association, 8/15/92]
- "On January 21st, they're gonna have legislation for all three [economy, health care, education]. I don't see why I should present one bill to Congress and wait another week and give them another bill and wait another week and give them another bill." [National Association of Radio Talk Show Hosts, 6/12/92]
- "In the first hundred days of our administration, Senator Gore and I will send to the United States Congress a plan to provide basic comprehensive health care to all Americans. . . and we will break the logjam in Congress, and pass it." [Y-Me National Breast Cancer Organization, 7/28/92]
- "That's why I have pledged within 100 days of a Clinton administration I would submit a comprehensive health care plan for real change . . ." [Merck Pharmaceuticals, 9/24/92]
- "Senator Gore and I have pledged to introduce our program in the first hundred days of our Administration, and we will fight to pass it. . . Today demonstrates that our commitment . . . to submit to Congress in our first hundred days sweeping, fundamental health care reform . . . **The time for such reform has clearly arrived.**" [Statement, 10/14/92]

## **HEALTH CARE FIRST PRIORITY: PRESIDENT CLINTON STATEMENTS**

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- "In the first 100 days of my administration, I will submit a plan to provide a basic package of comprehensive health care benefits to all Americans . . ." [USA Today, 4/29/03]

### **ECONOMIC CONFERENCE**

- "And the truth -- I'm just making the point ... we've got six months to do something on health care." [12/15/92]

### **INTRODUCTION OF THE TASK FORCE**

- "The Task Force's mission is simple. Build upon the work of the campaign and the transition. Listen to all parties and prepare health care reform legislation to be submitted to Congress within 100 days of our taking office." [1/25/93]

### **JOINT ADDRESS TO CONGRESS**

- "But all of our efforts to strengthen the economy will fail -- let me say this again, I feel so strongly about this -- all of our efforts to strengthen the economy will fail unless we also take this year, not next year, not five years from now, but this year, bold steps to reform our health care system." [2/17/93]

### **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SPEECH**

- "And sometime in the next several weeks, within 100 days after the time I took office, we'll be presenting a plan to the Congress and the American people to deal with [health care]." [2/23/92]

### **FIRST PRIME TIME PRESS CONFERENCE**

- "I do not believe we can make any serious attempt to go forward with [health care] until the economic plan and the budget is in place. **Then we will go forward with it.**" [6/15/93]

# THE URGENCY OF HEALTH CARE REFORM: PRESIDENT CLINTON STATEMENTS

## CAMPAIGN SPEECHES

- ". . . you, as an American voter, will insist and demand that this problem [health care] be solved, **not in another ten years but next year. That is as major, major, major factor in what ought to determine the outcome of this election for president of the United States.**" [Merck Pharmaceuticals, 9/24/92]
- "... we will fight to pass it. **For twelve years the Washington Republicans have denied the American people real health care reform. The results have been devastating . . .** There are literally thousands willing to fight for better health care for American families, and to make health care reform a reality. The time for such reform has clearly arrived." [Statement, 10/14/92]

## ECONOMIC CONFERENCE (December 15, 1992)

- "... then we've got six months to do something on health care. We are kidding each other, we are all just sitting here making this up if we think we can. . . get control of this budget if you don't do something on health care. It is a joke. [Pounding the table] It's going to bankrupt the country... I'm just saying **let's don't get fixated on stuff that is not as big as the stuff that's also out there that has to be dealt with. On the spending side, it's health care.**"

## INAUGURAL ADDRESS (January 20, 1993)

- "When the cost of health care devastates families and threatens to bankrupt our enterprises . . . The American people have summoned the change we celebrate today. You have raised your voices in an unmistakable chorus. . . Now we must do the work the season demands. To that work, I now turn with all the authority of my office."

## JOINT ADDRESS TO CONGRESS (February 17, 1993)

- "But all of our efforts to strengthen the economy will fail -- let me say this again, **I feel so strongly about this – all of our efforts to strengthen the economy will fail unless we also take this year, not next year, not five years from now, but this year, bold steps to reform our health care system.**"

## FIRST PRIME TIME NEWS CONFERENCE (June 15, 1993)

- "This issue affects the American people so deeply . . . The impetus behind doing something will be very great. **Whenever the debate really begins . . . you will see the prospects of passage intensify, not diminish . . .**"

## **SUPPORT FOR NAFTA: PRESIDENT CLINTON STATEMENTS**

### **QUALIFIED STATEMENT ON NAFTA:**

- "The goal of free trade is one I support **but NAFTA is only one piece of the strategy necessary** to ensure that we move wisely toward an integrated region. . . . **If implemented as part of a comprehensive economic growth strategy**, NAFTA will create the largest market in the world, spur more American jobs and promote growth in Mexico and Canada . . . A successful NAFTA, however, must be coupled with a plan to protect our environment and to prepare our entire workforce to compete in the global economy..." [NAFTA Statement from Campaign]

### **HEALTH CARE PROVIDES FOUNDATION FOR NAFTA**

- "We will never make manufacturing competitive in America unless we reform health care." [Y-Me]
- "Companies are forced to move overseas because of health care costs." [Merck]
- "[Health care] has to be part of our effort to restore growth, improve education and manage change in a tough global economy." [Merck]
- ". . . Manufacturing cannot compete in the global economy because of health care costs." [Fount. Hotel]

## THE COST OF HEALTH CARE DELAY: THE MEDIA SPEAKS (SINCE 6/1/93)

### *THE PUBLIC GROWS IMPATIENT:*

- *"News of the delay disappointed many advocates of health care reform..."* (L.A. Times, 6/24/93)
- *"Clinton's Travails Leave Health Care Reform Backers Worried"* (Washington Post, headline, 6/13/93)
- Washington Post-ABC News polls indicate "that many Americans are growing impatient with the administration's progress on health care reform. According to the surveys, less than half -- 44 percent -- currently approve of the way the president is handling the nation's health care system, down from 56 percent two months ago. **And nearly half said Clinton is moving too slowly on health care, a view even more widely held by those who disapprove of Clinton's performance on health care.**" (Washington Post, 7/07/03)
- "'What's being lost now is the intensity of the feeling about the need to solve the health care problem,' said Bob Leitman, a senior vice president of the Louis Harris and Associates polling firm who specializes in health care issues. **'The momentum for reform seems to be slowing with the delay of the plan.** The debate is starting to get focused on whether the solution is worst than the problem, not how to solve the problem,' he said." (Washington Post, 7/07/03)
- "'He's lost control of the national agenda on health care,' said Robert Blendon, chairman of the department of public health at Harvard University. 'By waiting, it will no longer be his plan versus the status quo, which everyone agrees is terrible. It's his plan versus the single-payer plan, versus the tax-credit plan, and it will be harder to get a consensus when there are these other plans on the table.'" (Washington Post, 7/07/93)
- "Health care reform advocates, watching as President Clinton suffers political setbacks, say they are worried for the first time about his prospects for passing a comprehensive restructuring of the health care system." (Washington Post, 6/13/93)

## THE COST OF HEALTH CARE DELAY

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### ***POLITICAL MOMENTUM FOR HEALTH CARE FADES:***

- *"Delays hurting prognosis for Clinton health-care plan"* (Ark.Dem.Gaz., headline, 6/27/93)
- *"Health plan delays put pressure on Democrats"* (Wash. Times, headline, 6/13/93)
- "And, as the Clinton health-care plan encounters delay after delay, **the once broad-based support for reform is showing signs of fraying**... Even strong supporters are beginning to complain... Those in the health care business are also impatient." (Ark.Dem.-Gaz., 6/27/93)
- "The latest Post-ABC News poll results, as well as follow-up interviews with survey respondents and health care experts, suggest **the administration may have lost political momentum by putting off release of the reform plan until fall**. Some even suggest that the president has placed at risk the chance for meaningful reform by first promising and then procrastinating on disclosure of his health care package." (Washington Post, 7/07/93)
- "The Administration's decision to delay the introduction of its health care reform package all but ensures that no legislation can be enacted this year and perhaps not until well into 1994 -- an election year in which office seekers may be loath to vote for complex piece of legislation that would require significant tax increases and spark attacks from doctors, hospitals, insurers, drug makers, small businesses and possibly even labor unions." (L.A. Times, 6/24/93)
- "As the release of President Clinton's health care reform package continues to be pushed back, the chances of the plan becoming law in 1993 vanish, and **the political stakes increase for next year**... Throwing the debate into an election year is likely to boost partisan rhetoric and may scare some lawmakers into voting against a tax increase." (Wash. Times, 6/13/93)
- "**Time is the enemy of the Clinton plan**. It now appears that Congress won't act on a health care bill in 1993. With House and Senate elections taking place in 1994, and with 1993's tax increases fresh on voters' minds, it is hard to imagine how the Clinton administration would find majorities in either house willing to vote for another round of major tax increases." (Wall Street Journal, 6/10/93)

## THE COST OF HEALTH CARE DELAY

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### ***PRESIDENT'S IMAGE SUFFERS:***

- "Yet, scarcely six months ago, President Clinton hung his domestic agenda -- and his presidency -- on achieving comprehensive health care reform." (Washington Post, 6/29/93)
- "Some pollsters say the latest delay... **may not be good for the president's image** in the short term." (Wash. Times, 6/13/93)
- "Every time there's an announcement of delay, **it contributes to [the sense of] Clinton's not being in control of events.**" (Humphrey Taylor, president of Louis Harris & Associates, a polling firm)
- "It would be dishonest not to say if you lose momentum, you affect everything else you do... **health care is a chance to get themselves [the Administration] back in gear...** he [Clinton] has placed a considerable chunk of his presidency on health care. Once could argue about whether it was wise to get so far out on a limb with this issue. **The fact is, he's out there on the very end of the limb.**" (Drew Altman, president of Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation)
- Waiting until next year for health care would be "bad policy and bad politics. Proposing and fighting for health security for American families is most of all what will improve the President's standing among the people." (Senator Harris Wofford (D., Pa.)

### ***SPECIAL INTERESTS ARE MOBILIZING TO DEFEAT CLINTON PLAN:***

- "*Drug Industry Gathers a Mix of Voices to Bolster Its Case*" (N.Y. Times, headline, 7/07/93)
- "President Clinton's health care plan has not even made it to Capitol Hill and already the health and insurance industries have increased their political action committee donations by 20 percent, giving \$2.2 million in the first five months of 1993, most of it to key health committee members." (Washington Post)

## THE COST OF HEALTH CARE DELAY

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### ***SPECIAL INTERESTS ARE MOBILIZING*** (Continued):

- "An ad hoc coalition of conservative organizations yesterday announced a campaign to denounce the Clinton administration's health care overhaul plan and to build support for an alternative: medical savings accounts." (Washington Post, 7/02/93)
- Citizens Against Rationing Health "announced yesterday it will wage a \$10 million campaign against what it describes as the 'bureaucratic nightmare' posed by President Clinton's expected health care plan." (Washington Post, 7/2/93)
- "AMA Lavishly Courts Congressional Staffers Who Will Affect Outcome of Clinton's Health Plan" (Wall Street Journal, headline, 6/30/93)

### ***DELAYING HEALTH REFORM HURTS THE ECONOMY:***

- "*Fixing Health Care May Cause Dislocation, But the Costs of Delay Could Be Greater*" (N.Y. Times, headline, 6/22/93)
- "...experts were quick to note that Americans also will pay dearly if Clinton and the Congress fail to agree on a plan. Unrestrained, health care costs can be expected to continue to erode profits and add to the deficit." (L.A. Times, 7/06/93)
- "Leaving the system alone is a decision too, and an expensive one." (Labor economist Audrey Freedman)
- "The wait has slowed changes within the health insurance industry." (Ark.Dem.-Gaz., 6/27/93)
- "But even as the recognition grows of the economic price attached to reform, most economists agree that the cost of delay would be even greater." (N.Y. Times, 6/22/93)
- "Equally important, procrastination would foil even the most resolute plans for balancing the Government budget." (N.Y. Times, 6/22/93)
- "But the biggest time bomb buried in the health insurance system is the burden on the federal budget." (N.Y. Times, 6/22/93)
- To abandon health care "is to say the hell with education, infrastructure, welfare reform and everything else." (Uwe Reinhardt, Princeton University)