

FOIA MARKER

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5/11/96 Radio Address - Teen Pregnancy (48 hours after birth)

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PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
RADIO ADDRESS TO THE NATION
MAY 11, 1996

Good morning. Tomorrow, millions of Americans will honor our mothers with hugs and bouquets and visits for dinner. Others of us will simply offer up a silent prayer for the mother who still lives in our heart but who has left this earth. I miss my own mother very much, but especially on Mother's Day. I can't give her roses tomorrow, but with your help we can honor all mothers by giving them something far more important -- the assurance that when they bring a baby into this world, they will not be rushed out of the hospital until they and their health care provider, not their insurance company, decides it is medically safe for both mother and child.

In 1970, the average length of stay for an uncomplicated hospital delivery was 4 days. By 1992, that average had declined to 2 days. Now a large and growing number of insurance companies are refusing to pay for anything more than a 24-hour stay, except in the most extreme circumstances, and some have recommended releasing women as early as 8 hours after delivery. This is an appalling trend that carries with it the potential for serious health problems. Early release of infants can result in numerous problems including feeding problems, severe dehydration, brain damage and stroke. In addition, many mothers are not physically capable of providing for a newborn's needs 24-hours after giving birth. They are exhausted, in pain and faced with an overwhelming set of new responsibilities. Many first time mothers also need more than 24 hours in the hospital to receive instruction in basic infant care and breast feeding.

And sometimes an early discharge can be fatal. Michelle Bauman testified before a Senate Committee that she was told to go home 28 hours after her daughter was born. Her baby died within one day of her going home. If she had been allowed a 48-hour stay, she would have been in the hospital when her daughter's symptoms appeared. As she so tragically put it, "Another 24 hours and [her baby's] symptoms would have surfaced so that we could have planned a christening, not a funeral."

Susan Jones and her baby son were discharged after about 24 hours. It turns out that he had a heart defect which was not noticed by the hospital or the home health nurse who came to visit on the third day. The baby died. Susan and an independent group of pediatric cardiologists believe the problem would have been noticed in the hospital by the second or third day.

As a nation that values the health of women and children, we must not turn our backs on this problem. There is an emerging national consensus that we must put a stop to these so-called "drive-through" deliveries. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Academy of Pediatrics have issued guidelines recommending a minimum stay of 48 hours following most normal deliveries and 96 hours following most cesarean sections. Sixteen states have enacted laws to guarantee that level of coverage and

25 states are considering such a move.

A growing number of hospitals have taken it upon themselves to provide the second day of coverage free. And one group of insurers, the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans of Pennsylvania have responded to public concerns by voluntarily offering 48 hour minimum coverage. I believe every insurance company should step up to this problem and do what these insurers in Pennsylvania have done.

But, in the absence of coverage for all women in all states, we have a responsibility to take action. Already, a Senate bill and separate House bills have been introduced -- all with bipartisan support -- to guarantee 48 hour post-partum hospital stays for mothers and their children. **I urge the members of Congress to resolve their differences and move legislation forward as soon as possible that makes this protection for mothers and their children the law of the land.**

Mothers should be guaranteed this protection. No insurance company should be free to make the final judgement about what is medically best for newborns and their mothers. That decision should be left up to doctors, nurses, and mothers themselves. Saving the life and health of mothers and newborns is more important than saving a few dollars.

America's mothers hold a special place in our hearts. They provide the lessons and care that enable all of our children to embrace the opportunities of this great land. They deliver the precious gift of life. Let's give them a Mother's Day gift they so richly deserve. Let's guarantee them 48 hour hospital stays to protect their health and the health of their new born babies. They have sacrificed so much for us. It's the least we can do for them.

Happy Mother's Day and thanks for listening.

DRAFT

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON RADIO ADDRESS TO THE NATION MAY 11, 1996

Good morning. Tomorrow, millions of Americans will honor our mothers with hugs and bouquets and visits for dinner. Others of us will simply offer up a silent prayer for the mother who still lives in our heart but who has left this earth. I miss my own mother very much, but especially on Mother's Day. I can't give her roses tomorrow, but with your help we can honor all mothers by giving them something far more important -- the assurance that when they bring a baby into this world, they will not be rushed out of the hospital until they and their health care provider, not their insurance company, decides it is medically safe for both mother and child.

In 1970, the average length of stay for an uncomplicated hospital delivery was 4 days. By 1992, that average had declined to 2 days. Now a large and growing number of insurance companies are refusing to pay for anything more than a 24-hour stay, except in the most extreme circumstances, and some have recommended releasing women as early as 8 hours after delivery. This is an appalling trend that carries with it the potential for serious health problems. Early release of infants can result in numerous problems including feeding problems, severe dehydration, brain damage and stroke. In addition, many mothers are not physically capable of providing for a newborn's needs 24-hours after giving birth. They are exhausted, in pain and faced with an overwhelming set of new responsibilities. Many first time mothers also need more than 24 hours in the hospital to receive instruction in basic infant care and breast feeding.

And sometimes an early discharge can be fatal. Michelle Bauman testified before a Senate Committee that she was told to go home 28 hours after her daughter was born. Her baby died within one day of her going home. If she had been allowed a 48-hour stay, she would have been in the hospital when her daughter's symptoms appeared. As she so tragically put it, "Another 24 hours and [her baby's] symptoms would have surfaced so that we could have planned a christening, not a funeral."

Susan Jones and her baby son were discharged after about 24 hours. It turns out that he had a heart defect which was not noticed by the hospital or the home health nurse who came to visit on the third day. The baby died. Susan and an independent group of pediatric cardiologists believe the problem would have been noticed in the hospital by the second or third day.

As a nation that values the health of women and children, we must not turn our backs on this problem. There is an emerging national consensus that we must put a stop to these so-called "drive-through" deliveries. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Academy of Pediatrics have issued guidelines recommending a minimum stay of 48 hours following most normal deliveries and 96 hours following most cesarean sections. Sixteen states have enacted laws to guarantee that level of coverage and

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And sometimes an early discharge can be fatal. Michelle Bauman testified before a Senate Committee hearing that she was told to go home 28 hours after her daughter was born. Her baby died within one day of her going home. If she had been allowed a 48-hour stay, she would have been in the hospital when her daughter's symptoms appeared. As she so tragically put it, "Another 24 hours and [her baby's] symptoms would have surfaced so that we could have planned a christening, not a funeral."

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25 states are considering such a move.

A growing number of hospitals have taken it upon themselves to provide the second day of coverage free. And one insurance company, Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans of Pennsylvania has responded to public concerns by offering 48 hour minimum coverage.

But, in the absence of coverage for all women in all states, Congress is taking action. A Senate bill and separate House bills have been introduced -- all with bipartisan support -- to guarantee 48 hour post-partum hospital stays.

Let me be clear: This should be law. No insurance company accountant should be free to make the final judgement about what is medically best for newborns and their mothers. That decision should be left up to doctors, nurses, and mothers themselves. Saving the life and health of mothers and newborns is more important than saving a few dollars.

America's mothers hold a special place in our hearts. They provide the lessons and care that have enabled generations of children to embrace the opportunities of this great land. They deliver the precious gift of life. Let's give them a Mother's Day gift they so richly deserve. Let's guarantee them 48 hour hospital stays to protect their health and the health of their new born babies. They have sacrificed so much for us. It's the least we can do for them.

Thank you, happy Mother's Day and thanks for listening.

E X E C U T I V E O F F I C E O F T H E P R E S I D E N T

10-Jun-1996 01:47pm

TO: Victoria L. Radd
TO: James T. Edmonds
TO: Gabrielle M. Bushman

FROM: Jeremy D. Benami
 Domestic Policy Council

CC: Jennifer L. Klein
CC: Deborah L. Fine

SUBJECT: teen pregnancy principles

Latest wording on the five teen pregnancy principles:

Abstinence

Clear Pathways to the Future

Parent and Adult Involvement

Community Involvement

Sustained Commitment

Let me know if those work for all of you.

Thanks.