

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

Health Care
Checklist

September 7, 1999

HEALTHCARE EVENT

DATE: September 8, 1999
LOCATION: East Room
BRIEFING TIME: 2:00pm – 2:30pm
EVENT TIME: 2:45pm – 3:15pm
FROM: Bruce Reed, Mary Beth Cahill, Chris Jennings

I. PURPOSE

To urge the Congress to pass the health care quality and coverage initiatives that have long been on the nation's agenda.

II. BACKGROUND

Today, at a White House event with a practicing family physician from Georgia, you will urge the Congress to make this fall a time of constructive achievement, not destructive politics. You will unveil a "health care checklist" detailing the work that still needs to be done, including passing: (1) a strong, enforceable, Patients' Bill of Rights; (2) Medicare reforms that strengthen and modernize the program; (3) long overdue medical records privacy protections; (4) health care options that empower Americans with disabilities to work free from concern over being uninsured; (5) legislation to increase the price of cigarettes and decrease the number of children who smoke; (6) increased funds for children's health insurance outreach; (7) critical provisions that provide Americans in need of long term care services or their caregivers financial assistance and support services; and (8) additional funds for essential public health priorities, such as biomedical research, mental health services, and Indian Health Services.

As you call on the Congress to move ahead, you will announce that you will take every administrative action possible in order to promote this important health care agenda. Today, you will announce that this fall, the Administration will release a proposed regulation to protect medical records privacy. You will also announce that with today's approval of the Children's Health Insurance Programs (CHIP) in Washington and Wyoming, all 50 states and every territory now have an approved CHIP program.

Urged the Congress to make the fall a season of health care legislative achievements.

Underscoring the fact that there are numerous health care initiatives that have been considered for extensive periods of time and now have broad-based bipartisan support, you will challenge the Congress to pass:

- ✓ **The bipartisan Norwood-Dingell Patients' Bill of Rights, without weakening or harmful amendments.** Noting that the Norwood-Dingell Patients' Bill of Rights already has a bipartisan majority in the House, you will urge Speaker Hastert to schedule a vote on this broadly supported legislation. You will note that over 200 health care and consumer organizations, including the AMA, have already endorsed this legislation and outline your opposition to provisions that water down or threaten the bipartisan support it has already achieved.
- ✓ **Medicare reforms which strengthen and modernize the program.** You will praise Finance Committee Chairman Roth (R-DE) and ranking member Moynihan (D-NY) for committing to mark-up a Medicare reform package early this fall. You will urge Chairman Roth to maintain this timetable and pass a strong, bipartisan initiative that will make the program more competitive, provide adequate financing to extend the life of the trust fund, and modernize the benefit package, including the provision of a long overdue and optional prescription drug benefit.
- ✓ **Legislation protecting the privacy of medical records.** You will note that the statutory deadline for Congress to pass legislation in this area expired in August. You will state that you will uphold your commitment, made in the State of the Union Address, to release statutorily authorized regulations in the absence of Congressional action by no later than this fall. Although disappointed with the lack of action by the Congress, you will continue to encourage Congress to pass bipartisan legislation in this area in order to provide broader authority in this area.
- ✓ **The Jeffords-Kennedy-Roth-Moynihan Work Incentives Improvement Act.** This legislation, which would enable individuals with disabilities to go to work without losing their eligibility for Medicare and Medicaid, passed the Senate by a unanimous vote. The legislation already has bipartisan support and has been cosponsored by over 230 members of the House. You will also urge Speaker Hastert to immediately schedule a vote on this historic legislation.
- ✓ **Legislation to increase funding for children's health insurance outreach and provide critical health insurance coverage to eligible legal immigrants.** You will urge the Congress to pass your proposal to increase funding for outreach activities by extending the life of and uses of the \$500 million fund for TANF-Medicaid outreach. You will also call on Congress to restore Medicaid eligibility to legal immigrant children, pregnant women, and SSI recipients. As he urged Congress to act to improve our success in covering children, you will announce the approval of the CHIP programs in Washington and Wyoming. With this announcement, all 50 states and every territory now have an approved CHIP program.

- ✓ **Legislation to increase the price of cigarettes and decrease the number of children who smoke.** You will reiterate the unacceptable fact that more than 400,000 Americans die each year from smoking related diseases and that almost 90 percent of them started smoking as teenagers. You will point out that increasing the cost of cigarettes is not only one of the most effective ways to prevent kids from starting to smoke, it is good fiscal policy. This is because revenue raised by this increase will help save the Social Security Trust Fund and maintain our commitment to the nation's parents and children.
- ✓ **Critically important long-term care initiative.** You will urge the Congress to pass a long-term care initiative to provide financial assistance, social support services, and new long-term care options to millions of Americans. Over five million Americans have significant limitations due to illness or disability and thus require long-term care. You will challenge the Congress to include these provisions in any tax bill they pass.
- ✓ **Additional funds for critical public health priorities.** You will urge the Congress to fund critical public health priorities, including new investments in biomedical and practice based research, mental health services, and the Indian Health Service. You will point out that these programs have traditionally received broad based, bipartisan support and emphasize that this year should be no different.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Briefing Participants:

Secretary Donna Shalala
Bruce Reed
Loretta Ucelli
Mary Beth Cahill
Chris Jennings
Lowell Weiss

Meet & Greet Participants:

Secretary Donna Shalala
Director Janice LaChance
Surgeon General David Satcher
Dr. Lanny Copeland (Albany, GA), Practicing Family Physician and President, American Academy of Family Physicians Congress of Delegates
Mica Copeland, spouse of Dr. Lanny Copeland

Program Participants:

YOU
Secretary Donna Shalala
Dr. Lanny Copeland

IV. PRESS PLAN

Open Press.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- **YOU** will proceed to the Blue Room for a meet & greet.
- **YOU** will be announced, accompanied by Secretary Donna Shalala and Dr. Lanny Copeland, into the East Room.
- Secretary Shalala will make brief remarks and introduce Dr. Lanny Copeland.
- Dr. Lanny Copeland will make brief remarks and introduce **YOU**.
- **YOU** will make remarks, work a ropeline, and depart.

VI. REMARKS

To be provided by speechwriting.

VI. ATTACHMENT

- Health Care Checklist