

TALKING POINTS RURAL HOSPITALS

DECEMBER 1989

The rural hospitals will receive a substantial increase in payment rates under the new prospective payment system beginning 1/1/90. Hospitals having a disproportionate share of low income patients with either greater than 100 beds or sole community hospital status will also receive a higher reimbursement rate with the required occupancy percentage reduced from 45% to 30%.

A board will be established in HHS to address reclassification of hospitals geographic status and specific applicable payment rates for each rural hospital if warranted. Hospitals having sole community hospital status will continue with that designation under the prospective payment system with the necessary adjustments to fully compensate for any fixed cost. Sole community hospitals will recover 100 percent of their capital related costs for inpatient hospital services.

Medicare-dependent, small rural hospitals, having less than 100 beds, will receive the greater of payment rates calculated by the Secretary's staff using a variety of factors. Any losses incurred due to circumstances beyond the control of the hospital and in excess of 5% reduction in utilization will be fully reimbursable.

Health services for rural residents can be enhanced through the exploration of programs established under OBRA '89:

a. Essential Access Community Hospital Program: encourage states to establish a rural health plan including components to address regionalization, rural health networks, telecommunication, transportation and 24-hours emergency medical services.

b. Regional Referral Centers designations being extended for three years.

c. Rural primary care hospital designation has broader criterias for designation including that inpatient care can be provided by physician's assistant or nurse practitioner, subject to physician oversight.

Rural hospitals may use grants to finance the cost incurred in converting to a rural primary care hospital, essential access community hospital or in becoming part of a rural health network

Financial resources will be directed to support physicians paraprofessionals and physicians-in-training develop clinical skills in rural areas

PHYSICIANS FEES

Fee discrepancies between surgical and primary care specialists will be narrowed by the phase-in of the new Resource-Based Relative Value Scale starting '92. Over priced procedures, radiology and anesthesiology services as well as other services will be adjusted to come into agreement with the Resource-Based Relative Value Scale while currently establishing a medical volume performance standard for physician fees.

NURSE PRACTITIONERS and NON-PHYSICIAN PROVIDERS

Services by these professionals, including nurse midwives and clinical nurse specialists, will be covered and paid to the institution of employment. Mental health services by clinical psychologists or clinical social workers will continue to be reimbursed with removal of the \$1,100 ceiling.

Rural Health Provisions

- o Market basket plus 3 percent update factor for rural hospitals has effect of reducing the 12 percent differential in basic urban and rural rates to about 8 percent.
- o Secretary is required to develop a legislative proposal to phase-out the separate payment rates by 1995.
- o Eligibility criteria for sole community hospitals is expanded; payment for these isolated providers will be at 100% of the highest of the Federal PPS rate, the current 1982 base year hospital-specific rate, or a hospital-specific rate computed using 1987 data.
- o Until the transition to a single rate begins, small Medicare dependent rural hospitals are eligible for payment under the new rules for sole community hospitals. These are hospitals with less than 100 beds and at least a 60% Medicare caseload.
- o Payment adjustments are increased for rural hospitals that serve a high proportion of low-income patients. The threshold for increased payments is lowered from 45 percent to 30 percent.
- o The Geographic Classification Review Board is established. The Secretary develop guidelines to be used by the Board to review requests by hospitals for a change in geographic classification.
- o Funding is provided for grant programs affecting rural hospitals: The Essential Access Community Hospital program is established, increased funding for rural health care transition grants is authorized at (\$25 million), and the rural health medical education demonstration project is expanded from four states to ten.

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92 LINES

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AP KANSAS PANORAMA<

By BARRY MASSEY=

Associated Press Writer=

WASHINGTON (AP) Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole emerged as one of President Bush's most reliable supporters in 1989, according to a new voting study that suggests the Kansan has shelved any differences with his former rival left from the 1988 campaign.

The analysis of votes in the House and Senate during the first session of the 101st Congress found that Dole backed Bush 94 percent of the time last year on votes in which the president had a clear position. Two other GOP senators had similar scores, but none were higher.

Sen. Nancy Kassebaum, R-Kan., supported the president 85 percent of the time last year.

The study by Congressional Quarterly, an independent Washington journal that has followed congressional voting for more than 40 years, examined 101 roll calls in the Senate and 86 recorded votes in the House. The annual voting analysis is considered by political scientists as one of the best yardsticks of trends of relations between Congress and the White House.

Traditionally, the GOP leader in the House and Senate is responsible for advancing and defending a Republican president's legislative goals. As such, Dole would be expected to serve as one of the most consistent presidential supporters in Congress. But the rivalry between Dole and Bush in the 1988 presidential campaign led many political observers to wonder whether the two men would have a smooth working relationship in 1989 or whether Dole might walk an independent line.

As it turned out, Dole proved to be a stronger supporter of Bush during his first year in office than the Kansan was for President Reagan in his initial year in 1981. Dole wasn't the GOP leader in 1981, but was the chairman of a key Senate tax-writing committee. Dole supported Reagan 84 percent of the time in 1981.

Dole's highest presidential support score during the Reagan administration came in 1985 and 1986, 92 percent, when the Kansan served as majority leader in the Senate. In 1988, Reagan's final year, Dole backed the president 68 percent of the time.

Walt Riker, a spokesman for Dole, said the senator's support for Bush reflected the Kansan's leadership post and he downplayed suggestions that it showed the two had overcome their campaign rivalry.

"Everyone has tried to make that case ever since Bush has been sworn in," said Riker. "Dole said over and over before election day that it was over and that it was his job as Senate leader to make George Bush a great president. He has more than kept his word. He had no intention of going back to Capitol Hill and being a Bush antagonist."

Kassebaum's presidential support during Bush's first year also was greater than during Reagan's inaugural year, when she backed Reagan 81 percent of the time.

Overall, Congressional Quarterly found that Bush won 63 percent of the votes on which he took a position in 1989, which was lower than any other first-year president other than Gerald Ford, who had a 58.2 percent win-loss record in Congress in 1974. Bush did better in the Senate, winning 73 percent of the time in which he had staked out a position. He won 50 percent of the time in the House

Among Kansans in the House, Rep. Pat Roberts, a Dodge City Republican, was the strongest presidential supporter last year, siding with Bush 79 percent of the time. That was more than Roberts did during Reagan's first year, when the Kansan supported the president 67 percent of the time. In 1988, Roberts backed Reagan on 62 percent of the votes testing the president's position.

Rep. Bob Whittaker, an Augusta Republican, had a 76 percent presidential support score in 1989. That compared with 70 percent in 1981 during Reagan's first year and 61 percent in 1988, Reagan's last year in office.

Rep. Jan Meyers, an Overland Park Republican, backed Bush on 69 percent of the votes in 1989. In 1988, she supported Reagan 52 percent of the time. She was not in office in 1981.

Rep. Jim Slattery, a Topeka Democrat, supported Bush 45 percent of the time in 1989, compared with 32 percent presidential support for Reagan in 1988. Slattery was not in office in 1981.

Rep. Dan Glickman, a Wichita Democrat, was the most frequent opponent of Bush in 1989. He backed the president on 37 percent of the votes testing Bush's position.

Glickman was the only Kansas lawmaker to have a lower presidential support score in Bush's first year than during Reagan's inaugural year. Glickman supported Reagan 47 percent of the time in 1981, and 32 percent of the time in 1988.

House Democrats, on average, backed Bush 36 percent of the time in 1989 compared with 69 percent for House Republicans. Senate Republicans had an average president support score of 82 percent compared with 55 percent for Senate Democrats.

In 1981, Reagan's first year, House Democrats recorded an average presidential support score of 42 percent; House Republicans, 68 percent; Senate Republicans, 80 percent; and Senate Democrats, 49

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Carlin Says He'll Keep His Course Toward May Governor Announcement<
By LEW FERGUSON-

Associated Press Writer=

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) Former Gov. John Carlin said Tuesday he on course to announce in May that he is a candidate for Democratic nomination for governor this year, regardless of Monday's disclosure that U.S. Rep. Jim Slattery is considering getting back into the race.

Slattery issued a brief statement saying he is rethinking his decision last August not to run for governor, at the urging of others.

Carlin said the situation between him and Slattery could be resolved very quickly, and Slattery said it should be decided within two weeks.

The two have talked several times on the telephone in recent days, and could meet face-to-face by the end of the week, sources said.

Few Democrats expect the two to clash in a primary election this summer, because of the divisiveness that could cause and the strain it would put on party financial resources for the general election, when incumbent Mike Hayden is expected to be the Republican opponent.

There are two declared candidates for the Democratic nomination, state Treasurer Joan Finney and Topeka minister Fred W. Phelps Sr.

After Slattery got out of the race, Carlin said in October that he would explore the depth of his support with an eye toward running but would not have any official announcement until spring.

"I have repeatedly made my position clear, that I made my decision and I'm continuing on my course," Carlin said in an interview Tuesday.

"I read Jim's statement, and we've talked two or three times. I continue to proceed down the line."

Asked if Slattery asked him to step aside so he could re-enter the race and not precipitate an intraparty confrontation between two of the Democrats' top politicians, Carlin replied, "I'll let him speak for himself."

Carlin, who served two four-year terms as governor in 1979-87 but was ineligible under the state Constitution to seek a third consecutive term, said he has been "very pleased" with the reception his probable candidacy has received in the three months he has been lining up support.

"Obviously when I started out I'd, in essence, made my decision pending finding out that I couldn't raise money or I couldn't organize (a campaign)," Carlin said. "But I've been very pleased with the reaction."

"I'm aware there are some around the state who might speculate whether Jim Slattery might be the better candidate. But you always have speculation in politics."

One factor some Democrats cite in arguing that Slattery might make the better candidate for the party is that Carlin has just about as much political liability on the property tax issue as does incumbent Republican Mike Hayden, who has all but officially announced he will seek re-election this year.

Carlin was governor and Hayden was speaker of the Kansas House when the bill ordering statewide reappraisal of property was passed and a property classification amendment submitted to voters. Carlin insisted that the amendment accompany the reappraisal mandate, with the aim of protecting home owners from large property tax shifts.

"I have no problem defending what I did, and will do, at the appropriate time," Carlin said of the reappraisal and classification issue.

"I think it's safe to say there are a lot of problems left with reappraisal. Those problems became obvious when the governor (Hayden) fired his property valuation director."

The statewide reappraisal effort began in 1986 when Carlin still was governor and was completed during Hayden's administration. Hayden replaced Terry Hamblin as PVD director on Dec. 5, with John Luttjohann taking his place.

(R - Kansas)

SH 141 Hart Building, Washington, D.C. 20510

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DOLE DEFENDS PRESIDENT BUSH'S RECORD ON JUDICIAL NOMINEES

WASHINGTON - SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BOB DOLE (R-KS) ISSUED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO A REPORT CRITICIZING PRESIDENT BUSH'S RECORD ON JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS:

"LAST NIGHT, THE CBS EVENING NEWS RAN A STORY THAT CRITICIZED PRESIDENT BUSH FOR THE SO-CALLED DELAY IN FILLING FEDERAL COURT VACANCIES. THIS STORY WAS UNFAIR AND MISLEADING IN A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT RESPECTS.

WHILE THE CBS STORY WAS EAGER TO HIGHLIGHT THE VACANCIES ON THE FEDERAL BENCH, IT FAILED TO POINT OUT THAT PRESIDENT BUSH MADE 23 JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS LAST SESSION AND THAT 15 OF THESE NOMINATIONS WERE CONFIRMED BY THE SENATE. ONE OF THOSE CONFIRMED WAS VAUGHN WALKER, WHO WAS FIRST NOMINATED BY PRESIDENT REAGAN IN FEBRUARY OF 1987, RENOMINATED IN 1989, AND FINALLY CONFIRMED IN NOVEMBER. THE CBS STORY ALSO FAILED TO POINT OUT THAT PRESIDENT BUSH INTENDS TO ANNOUNCE MORE THAN 20 ADDITIONAL JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS SHORTLY AFTER CONGRESS RECONVENES LATER THIS MONTH. FINALLY, THE STORY MADE NO MENTION OF THE CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME SPENT WITH THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION REGARDING ITS ROLE IN THE NOMINATIONS PROCESS.

WHAT DOES THIS ALL PROVE? IT PROVES THAT THE MEDIA WILL NOT HESITATE TO USE THE FACTS SELECTIVELY IN ORDER TO PUT THE "DESIRABLE" SPIN ON AN OTHERWISE UNNEWSTHORTHY STORY.

PRESIDENT BUSH RECOGNIZES THAT IT TAKES TIME TO SELECT AND CONFIRM QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS TO FILL FEDERAL COURT VACANCIES. THE PRESIDENT ALSO REALIZES THAT THE TERMS OF FEDERAL COURT JUDGES ARE NOT LIMITED LIKE THE TERMS OF MEMBERS OF CONGRESS. AN APPOINTMENT TO THE FEDERAL BENCH IS A LIFETIME APPOINTMENT, AND ANY PRESIDENT - - NOT ONLY PRESIDENT BUSH -- MUST BE VERY CAREFUL IN SELECTING THE RIGHT PEOPLE TO FILL THESE POSITIONS. IF THE PRESIDENT HAS DEVOTED A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME TO THIS PROCESS, HE HAS GOOD REASON: ONCE ON THE BENCH, A FEDERAL JUDGE WILL SPEND A LIFETIME EXERCISING AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF INFLUENCE OVER OUR CITIZENS. AND LET'S FACE IT: IT'S NOT EASY TO REMOVE A FEDERAL JUDGE ONCE CONFIRMED, AS THE SENATE WELL KNOWS FROM THE TWO LENGTHY IMPEACHMENT TRIALS CONDUCTED LAST SESSION.

FINALLY, LET ME PUT TO REST THE RUMOR THAT A FEUD IS NOW SIMMERING BETWEEN THE WHITE HOUSE AND SENATE REPUBLICANS OVER THE JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS PROCESS. SUCH A FEUD IS NOTHING MORE THAN A FIGMENT OF THE MEDIA'S IMAGINATION. THE WHITE HOUSE, THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, AND THE REPUBLICAN MEMBERS OF THE SENATE HAVE ONE COLLECTIVE GOAL: TO SELECT AND CONFIRM THE MOST QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS TO FILL THE CURRENT VACANCIES ON THE FEDERAL BENCH. AS WE WORK TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, WE WILL CONTINUE TO CLARIFY THOSE ASPECTS OF THE JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS PROCESS ABOUT WHICH THERE IS HONEST DISAGREEMENT."

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