

March 17, 1992

TO: SENATOR DOLE
FROM: SHEILA BURKE
SUBJECT: SPEECH TO DENTAL ASSOCIATION



You are scheduled to speak at the American Dental Association Public Affairs Conference tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m. There will be approximately 250 - 275 in the audience including four Kansans: Carl Schmitthenner, Gary Newman, Cindy Sherwood, and Bob Morrison.

The group is made up of their state and national leadership who are here to discuss a variety of issues of concern to dentists. They will have heard from Senator Hatch, Governor Mike Castle, Cokie Roberts, Kevin Phillips and a group of state legislators.

You have been asked to give brief, informal remarks on any topic of your choosing. They would like your views on the possibility of major health reform, in addition to other issues of national importance, budget, etc.,.

American
Dental
Association

1111 14th Street, NW
Suite 1100
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 898-2400
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Leonard P. Wheat
Director
Government Relations

SPEAK

Wed, March 18
ADA

12:00 - 1:00 pm
Capitol Hill Club

582
1234
Pub 41 cmf.

The Honorable Bob Dole
Senate Minority Leader
S 230 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

will make
contribution to
the program for
lunch

copy 200-300

Gy

Dear Senator Dole:

I am writing to invite you to present the luncheon address at
the American Dental Association Public Affairs Conference to be
held in Washington, DC on March 18, 1992.


The Association's Public Affairs Conference, initiated in 1973, serves as a national forum for a discussion of health policy issues confronting the White House, Congress and the respective States. We have been privileged in past years to have the Vice President, Members of the Cabinet, the Congressional leadership and senior State officials appear on the Conference program. The audience of approximately 275 persons will include dental leaders from throughout the United States, the officers and trustees of the American Dental Association as well as representatives of major national health organizations.

Our 1992 Conference will focus on national domestic and political issues within the context of the coming elections. Your views on the prospects for "health care reform" from the perspective of the Senate and the Republican Party would be a valuable asset to this important dental meeting.

The luncheon is scheduled from 12:00 - 1:00 on Wednesday, March 18 at the Capitol Hill Club. I would be pleased to provide all appropriate arrangements to facilitate your participation in our Conference.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you or your staff have any questions.

Sincerely,


Leonard P. Wheat
Director
Government Relations

LPW:kc

12-26-91 Interim letter

Williamson

(312) 641-1992

701-7119

- (312) 339-0234

Jones

**SENATOR BOB DOLE
AMERICAN DENTAL
ASSOCIATION
MARCH 18, 1992**

**WASHINGTON IS A CITY
FULL OF AGENDAS. BUT AS I'M
SURE SENATOR HATCH NOTED
IN HIS COMMENTS YESTERDAY,
IF ONE DOMINATES THE LIST, IT
IS HEALTH CARE REFORM.**

**AFTER COUNTLESS YEARS OF
NEGLECT, ITS TIME HAS COME.**

**THE U. S. HEALTH CARE
SYSTEM IS ADMIRERD
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD FOR
ITS OUTSTANDING QUALITY. WE
DON'T HAVE LONG WAITING
LISTS. WE DON'T RATION CARE.
WE HAVE THE BEST TRAINED**

**HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IN
THE WORLD. BUT, POLL AFTER
POLL TELLS US THAT THE
AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE
CONCERNED, PARTICULARLY
ABOUT COSTS, AND WANT US TO
DO SOMETHING. IN FACT, I
HEARD IT AT NEARLY EVERY
TOWN MEETING I ATTENDED IN**

KANSAS OVER THE PAST MONTHS.

**WITH AN ELECTION YEAR
ALREADY WELL UNDER WAY,
CANDIDATES AT EVERY LEVEL
ARE RUNNING ALL OVER THE
PLACE MAKING SPEECHES
ABOUT HEALTH CARE,
SCRAMBLING LIKE THEY JUST**

**DISCOVERED THE ISSUE -- AND
MOST OF THEM HAVE. BUT,
BETTER LATE THAN NEVER.**

**I SUSPECT SOME OF MY
COLLEAGUES HAVE HAD THE
SAME EXPERIENCE I HAD WHEN I
TOURED ALL OF THE 105
COUNTIES IN KANSAS. THE CITY
MANAGER, THE GRAIN**

**ELEVATOR OPERATOR AND THE
LOCAL GAS STATION OWNER
WERE ALL LIVING IN FEAR OF A
LOSS OF THEIR HEALTH
INSURANCE, IF THEY HADN'T
LOST IT ALREADY.**

**EVERY AMERICAN KNOWS
FIRSTHAND THAT HEALTH CARE
COSTS HAVE RUN AMOK. THIS**

**YEAR, WE'LL SPEND OVER \$800
BILLION ON HEALTH CARE -- A
FIGURE WELL ABOVE ANY
ECONOMY IN THE WORLD AND,
IN FACT, MORE THAN THE TOTAL
GNP OF SOME COUNTRIES. YET
THE NUMBER OF UNINSURED
AND UNDERINSURED HAS
GROWN. AND THE MIDDLE
CLASS ARE GETTING MORE AND**

**MORE CONCERNED ABOUT THE
AFFORDABILITY OF HEALTH
CARE. THAT'S WHY WHEN I
READ POLLS INDICATING THAT
90% OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
FEEL OUR HEALTH CARE
SYSTEM NEEDS FUNDAMENTAL
CHANGE, I BELIEVE IT.**

**THAT MESSAGE DOESN'T
COME AS ANY SURPRISE, BUT IT
DOES UNDERSCORE THE FACT
THAT DESPITE THE BEST
EFFORTS OF REPUBLICANS AND
DEMOCRATS DURING THE PAST
DECADES, THE PROBLEM
REMAINS. THE RESULT: AN
OVERHAUL OF THE HEALTH
CARE SYSTEM LOOMS AS A**

**MAJOR -- MAYBE THE MAJOR --
DOMESTIC ISSUE IN THE
COMING YEARS.**

**REFORM PROPOSALS TO
REVAMP THE CURRENT SYSTEM
ARE IN NO SHORT SUPPLY ON
CAPITOL HILL. MY LATEST
COUNT IS 24. THERE'S ALSO
BEEN A FLOOD OF REFORM**

**PROPOSALS THAT HAVE
POURED OUT OF BUSINESS,
LABOR, MEDICAL, INSURANCE,
AND GRASSROOTS
ORGANIZATIONS.**

**WHAT'S BLOCKING ACTION -
- TWO THINGS? (1) THERE'S A
LOT OF FINGER-POINTING GOING
ON DURING THIS CAMPAIGN**

**YEAR. DEMOCRATS POINT TO
THE WHITE HOUSE. OTHERS
POINT TO A DEMOCRAT-
CONTROLLED CONGRESS.
DOCTORS POINT TO THE
LAWYERS. INSURANCE
COMPANIES POINT TO
WASTEFUL HOSPITALS AND
DOCTORS WHO CHARGE TOO
MUCH. SMALL BUSINESS**

**POINTS TO THE INSURANCE
COMPANIES. INTEREST GROUPS
POINT TO A LACK OF
CONSENSUS. EVERYONE TALKS
ABOUT HOW COMPLEX THE
ISSUE IS. AND MEANWHILE, THE
AMERICAN PEOPLE WATCH IN
FRUSTRATION AS THEIR
COVERAGE DWINDLES, OR EVEN
DISAPPEARS IN SOME CASES,**

**AND COSTS GO HIGHER AND
HIGHER.**

**IN MY VIEW, THE
PRESIDENT'S HEALTH CARE
PROPOSAL -- AS WELL AS A
SENATE REPUBLICAN PLAN I
HAVE COSPONSORED ALONG
WITH 23 OF MY COLLEAGUES --
DEMONSTRATE THAT WE CAN**

**ADDRESS THE ACCESS AND
COST CONCERNS OF ALL
AMERICANS WITHOUT
CRIPPLING OUR ECONOMY, AND
WITHOUT PUTTING OUR
EMPLOYERS ON THE CRITICAL
LIST WITH MANDATES AND NEW
TAXES, AS THE "PLAY OR PAY"
CROWD WOULD HAVE IT.**

**MY GUESS IS THAT MOST
DENTISTS ARE, IN FACT, SMALL
BUSINESS OWNERS IN THEIR
OWN RIGHT. WHAT THE "PLAY
OR PAY" PROPONENTS DON'T
SEEM TO UNDERSTAND IS THAT
THOSE OF YOU WHO RUN SMALL
BUSINESSES DO WANT TO
PROVIDE HEALTH INSURANCE
FOR YOUR EMPLOYEES. YOU**

**JUST NEED A LITTLE HELP
DOING IT. WE CAN EITHER HELP
LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME
AMERICANS BUY INSURANCE ON
THE FREE MARKET, OR WE CAN
BURY OUR BUSINESSES UNDER
A MOUNTAIN OF NEW
MANDATES. YES, AMERICANS
WANT AFFORDABLE HEALTH
CARE, BUT THEY SHOULDN'T**

HAVE TO PAY FOR IT WITH THEIR
JOBS.

**IN OUR BILL, SOME PEOPLE
WILL BE HELPED THROUGH THE
USE OF TAX CREDITS. OTHERS
WILL BENEFIT THROUGH THE
EXPANSION OF THE COMMUNITY
HEALTH CLINIC PROGRAM,
WHILE STILL OTHERS WILL AVAIL**

**THEMSELVES OF COVERAGE
UNDER THE STATE PUBLICLY
FINANCED PROGRAM.**

**IN SUMMARY, I BELIEVE ANY
PROPOSAL MUST NOT ONLY
ADDRESS MANY OF THE
DEFICIENCIES OF OUR DELIVERY
SYSTEM, BUT ALSO PRESERVE
THE MANY STRENGTHS OUR**

**CURRENT HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
OFFERS.**

**OUR HEALTH
PROFESSIONALS CERTAINLY
DESERVE A GREAT DEAL OF
PRAISE. THANKS TO THEM,
AMERICA IS THE MEDICAL
MIRACLE WORKER. WE ARE
LIVING LONGER THAN EVER**

**BEFORE. WE'VE DEFEATED
PLAGUES; TOOTH DECAY AND
CAVITIES ARE ALMOST A THING
OF THE PAST; WE HAVE MADE
MEDICAL ADVANCES THAT CAN
SAVE THE LIFE OF EVEN THE
SMALLEST, FRAILEST NEWBORN;
AND WE HAVE LEARNED HOW TO
MAKE SPARE PARTS FOR
NEARLY EVERY BODY ORGAN.**

**THE QUALITY OF HEALTH CARE
THAT AMERICA'S
PROFESSIONALS DELIVER IS
ENVIED AND ADMIRERD WORLD
WIDE, AND IS SECOND TO NONE.**

**BUT UNFORTUNATELY, THIS
IS NOT ENOUGH. YES, OUR
HEALTH CARE IS SUPERIOR TO
THAT OF ANY OTHER NATION.**

**BUT, THE CHALLENGE NOW IS
TO MAKE THIS CARE AVAILABLE
TO ALL AMERICANS -- AND TO
LEAVE NO ONE OUT OF THE
SYSTEM.**

**SETTING ASIDE OUR
HEALTH POLICY DIFFERENCES
WITH THE DEMOCRATS FOR A
MOMENT, LET ME TOUCH ON**

**THE SECOND ISSUE PREVENTING
PROGRESS ON HEALTH CARE
REFORM -- THE DEFICIT.**

**IN REAL LIFE WE HAVE
FISCAL CONSTRAINTS, DEFICITS,
AND CRIME AND DRUG
PROBLEMS THAT ARE ALSO
STRAINING OUR THINNING
BUDGET. LIKE I SAID EARLIER,**

**WASHINGTON HAS MANY
AGENDAS. THERE IS NO SINGLE
MAGICAL SOLUTION THAT WILL
ALWAYS RESULT IN A HAPPY
ENDING. WE CONTINUE TO
MORTGAGE OUR CHILDREN'S
FUTURE BY FAILING TO
ADDRESS THE NUMBER ONE
DOMESTIC PROBLEM. WE DON'T
HAVE ANY NEW MONEY TO**

**SPEND IN HEALTH, EDUCATION,
CRIME -- WHATEVER THE ISSUE.
BUT AS SERIOUS AS THE
PROBLEM IS, THERE IS NO
CONSENSUS ON WHAT TO DO.
EVERYONE WANTS MORE
WITHOUT GIVING UP ANYTHING.
THE ELDERLY TAUGHT US THAT
WHEN WE FOUGHT OVER THE
CATASTROPHIC HEALTH**

**INSURANCE PROPOSAL. BUT, IF
WE ARE TO MAKE ANY
PROGRESS SOMETHING AND
SOMEONE HAS TO GIVE.**

ECONOMIC GROWTH

**BY A VOTE OF 50-47, THE
SENATE PASSED A SO-CALLED
"ECONOMIC GROWTH" BILL,**

**WHICH WILL EVENTUALLY BE
VETOED BY THE PRESIDENT--AS
IT SHOULD BE.**

**THE DEMOCRATS CALL IT A
"FAIRNESS" BILL.**

**WELL IT'S A FAIRNESS BILL,
ONLY IF FAIRNESS MEANS THAT
MISERY LOVES COMPANY, AND**

**THE PRESENT UNEMPLOYED
WANT SEVERAL MILLION MORE
TO JOIN THEM.**

**THE FACT IS THAT 89% OF
THE TAX INCREASES IN THE BILL
WILL COME STRAIGHT OUT OF
THE POCKET OF AMERICAN
SMALL BUSINESSMEN AND
WOMEN--BUSINESSMEN AND**

**WOMEN WHO WILL SEE THEIR
MONEY GO TO UNCLE SAM
INSTEAD OF USING IT TO HIRE
NEW EMPLOYEES.**

**THIS IS BECAUSE SMALL
BUSINESS, SUCH AS SOLE
PROPRIETORS, PARTNERSHIPS,
AND SUB-CHAPTER S
CORPORATIONS FILE THEIR**

TAXES AS INDIVIDUALS.

**BUT IT'S NOT TOO LATE. IF
WE CAN GET BEYOND THE
POLITICAL GAMES, IF THE
DEMOCRATS WOULD EMBRACE
A GROWTH INITIATIVE RATHER
THAN A JOB KILLER, WE WOULD
HAVE A BILL THAT THE
PRESIDENT WOULD SIGN**

**IMMEDIATELY. BUT MORE THAN
THAT -- IT WOULD
DEMONSTRATE THAT CONGRESS
CAN ACT RESPONSIBLY, TO THE
BENEFIT OF ALL AMERICANS.**

**BUT, THEN AGAIN,
YESTERDAY'S WASHINGTON
POST SUMMED UP A FEELING
SHARED BY MILLIONS OF**

**AMERICANS. THEY WROTE, "THE
RISK OF BAD LEGISLATION THIS
SESSION IS MUCH GREATER
THAN THE LIKELIHOOD OF ANY
GOOD. GO HOME."**

BACK TO HEALTH CARE

**FINALLY, BACK ON THE
SUBJECT OF HEALTH CARE**

**REFORM, WHILE THERE IS
OBVIOUSLY MAJOR
DISAGREEMENT OVER THE BIG
REFORM PROPOSALS, I THINK
WE CAN MAKE SOME IMMEDIATE
PROGRESS IN OTHER AREAS
THAT WILL RESULT IN MAKING
INSURANCE MORE AFFORDABLE
AND AVAILABLE FOR THOSE
WORKING FOR SMALL**

BUSINESSES.

**BUT EVEN IF WE CAN
REACH AGREEMENT ON THE
SMALL REFORM PACKAGE OR
THE BIG ONE, UNLESS WE CAN
ALSO MAKE PROGRESS IN
CHANGING THE FUNDAMENTAL
BEHAVIOR OF PATIENTS AND
PROVIDERS OF HEALTH CARE --**

**WE WILL REALLY HAVE DONE
ONLY HALF OF THE JOB.**

**PATIENTS HAVE TO START
TAKING MORE RESPONSIBILITY
FOR THEMSELVES, AND
PROVIDERS HAVE TO HELP
THEM LEARN TO USE THE
SYSTEM MORE APPROPRIATELY.
PROVIDERS THEMSELVES NEED**

**TO LEARN HOW TO ORGANIZE
CARE IN A WAY THAT PROVIDES
QUALITY WITH LESS QUANTITY
AND FRANKLY HELP US SPEND
OUR RESOURCES IN SMARTER
WAYS. ITS NOT THAT WE'RE
NOT SPENDING ENOUGH -- ITS
THAT WE'RE NOT SPENDING IT
IN THE RIGHT WAYS.**

**WE ARE FINALLY SEEING A
NEEDED EMPHASIS ON
PREVENTION, ON HEALTHY
LIFESTYLES, ON PRIMARY CARE.
DENTISTS HAVE CLEARLY BEEN
AT THE FOREFRONT IN
PRESSING FOR PREVENTIVE
BEHAVIOR. I AM HOPEFUL THAT
OUR FINANCING AND HEALTH
MANPOWER TRAINING**

**PROGRAMS WILL BUILD ON
THESE EFFORTS.**

**THE POLITICAL CLIMATE IS
RIPE FOR ACTION BECAUSE
REFORM HAS BECOME JUST AS
CRUCIAL TO THE MIDDLE CLASS
AS THE POOR. CONTRARY TO
POPULAR BELIEF, THE
UNINSURED ARE NOT**

**DOMINATED BY WELFARE
RECIPIENTS OR DEADBEATS;
MORE THAN 85% OF THE THIRTY-
SOME MILLION UNINSURED
AMERICANS ARE WORKERS AND
THEIR DEPENDENTS. UNLESS
CONGRESS TAKES SOME
ACTION, COSTS IN THE MEDICAL
MARKETPLACE WILL CONTINUE
TO SPEED OUT OF CONTROL,**

**WHILE COVERAGE CONTINUES
TO CREEP TO A HALT.**

**I THINK THAT'S A BITTER
PILL NO AMERICAN SHOULD
HAVE TO SWALLOW.**

SENATOR BOB DOLE
AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION
MARCH 18, 1992

WASHINGTON IS A CITY FULL OF AGENDAS. BUT AS I'M SURE SENATOR HATCH NOTED IN HIS COMMENTS YESTERDAY, IF ONE DOMINATES THE LIST, IT IS HEALTH CARE REFORM. AFTER COUNTLESS YEARS OF NEGLECT, ITS TIME HAS COME.

THE U. S. HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IS ADMIRERD THROUGHOUT THE WORLD FOR ITS OUTSTANDING QUALITY. WE DON'T HAVE LONG WAITING LISTS. WE DON'T RATION CARE. WE HAVE THE BEST TRAINED HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IN THE WORLD. BUT, POLL AFTER POLL TELLS US THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE CONCERNED, PARTICULARLY ABOUT COSTS, AND WANT US TO DO SOMETHING. IN FACT, I HEARD IT AT NEARLY EVERY TOWN MEETING I ATTENDED IN KANSAS OVER THE PAST MONTHS.

WITH AN ELECTION YEAR ALREADY WELL UNDER WAY, CANDIDATES AT EVERY LEVEL ARE RUNNING ALL OVER THE PLACE MAKING SPEECHES ABOUT HEALTH CARE, SCRAMBLING LIKE THEY JUST DISCOVERED THE ISSUE -- AND MOST OF THEM HAVE. BUT, BETTER LATE THAN NEVER.

I SUSPECT SOME OF MY COLLEAGUES HAVE HAD THE SAME EXPERIENCE I HAD WHEN I TOURED ALL OF THE 105 COUNTIES IN KANSAS. THE CITY MANAGER, THE GRAIN ELEVATOR OPERATOR AND THE LOCAL GAS STATION OWNER WERE ALL LIVING IN FEAR OF A LOSS OF THEIR HEALTH INSURANCE, IF THEY HADN'T LOST IT ALREADY.

EVERY AMERICAN KNOWS FIRSTHAND THAT HEALTH CARE COSTS HAVE RUN AMOK. THIS YEAR, WE'LL SPEND OVER \$800 BILLION ON HEALTH CARE -- A FIGURE WELL ABOVE ANY ECONOMY IN THE WORLD AND, IN FACT, MORE THAN THE TOTAL GNP OF SOME COUNTRIES. YET THE NUMBER OF UNINSURED AND UNDERINSURED HAS GROWN. AND THE MIDDLE CLASS ARE GETTING MORE AND MORE CONCERNED ABOUT THE AFFORDABILITY OF HEALTH CARE. THAT'S WHY WHEN I READ POLLS INDICATING THAT 90% OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE FEEL OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM NEEDS FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE, I BELIEVE IT.

THAT MESSAGE DOESN'T COME AS ANY SURPRISE, BUT IT DOES UNDERSCORE THE FACT THAT DESPITE THE BEST EFFORTS OF REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS DURING THE PAST DECADES, THE PROBLEM REMAINS. THE RESULT: AN OVERHAUL OF THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM LOOMS AS A MAJOR -- MAYBE THE MAJOR -- DOMESTIC ISSUE IN THE COMING YEARS.

REFORM PROPOSALS TO REVAMP THE CURRENT SYSTEM ARE IN NO SHORT SUPPLY ON CAPITOL HILL. MY LATEST COUNT IS 24. THERE'S ALSO BEEN A FLOOD OF REFORM PROPOSALS THAT HAVE POURED OUT OF BUSINESS, LABOR, MEDICAL, INSURANCE, AND GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS.

WHAT'S BLOCKING ACTION -- TWO THINGS? (1) THERE'S A LOT OF FINGER-POINTING GOING ON DURING THIS CAMPAIGN YEAR. DEMOCRATS POINT TO THE WHITE HOUSE. OTHERS POINT TO A DEMOCRAT-CONTROLLED CONGRESS. DOCTORS POINT TO THE LAWYERS. INSURANCE COMPANIES

POINT TO WASTEFUL HOSPITALS AND DOCTORS WHO CHARGE TOO MUCH. SMALL BUSINESS POINTS TO THE INSURANCE COMPANIES. INTEREST GROUPS POINT TO A LACK OF CONSENSUS. EVERYONE TALKS ABOUT HOW COMPLEX THE ISSUE IS. AND MEANWHILE, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WATCH IN FRUSTRATION AS THEIR COVERAGE DWINDLES, OR EVEN DISAPPEARS IN SOME CASES, AND COSTS GO HIGHER AND HIGHER.

IN MY VIEW, THE PRESIDENT'S HEALTH CARE PROPOSAL -- AS WELL AS A SENATE REPUBLICAN PLAN I HAVE COSPONSORED ALONG WITH 23 OF MY COLLEAGUES -- DEMONSTRATE THAT WE CAN ADDRESS THE ACCESS AND COST CONCERNS OF ALL AMERICANS WITHOUT CRIPPLING OUR ECONOMY, AND WITHOUT PUTTING OUR EMPLOYERS ON THE CRITICAL LIST WITH MANDATES AND NEW TAXES, AS THE "PLAY OR PAY" CROWD WOULD HAVE IT.

MY GUESS IS THAT MOST DENTISTS ARE, IN FACT, SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS IN THEIR OWN RIGHT. WHAT THE "PLAY OR PAY" PROPONENTS DON'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND IS THAT THOSE OF YOU WHO RUN SMALL BUSINESSES DO WANT TO PROVIDE HEALTH INSURANCE FOR YOUR EMPLOYEES. YOU JUST NEED A LITTLE HELP DOING IT. WE CAN EITHER HELP LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME AMERICANS BUY INSURANCE ON THE FREE MARKET, OR WE CAN BURY OUR BUSINESSES UNDER A MOUNTAIN OF NEW MANDATES. YES, AMERICANS WANT AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE, BUT THEY SHOULDN'T HAVE TO PAY FOR IT WITH THEIR JOBS.

IN OUR BILL, SOME PEOPLE WILL BE HELPED THROUGH THE USE OF TAX CREDITS. OTHERS WILL BENEFIT THROUGH THE EXPANSION OF THE

COMMUNITY HEALTH CLINIC PROGRAM, WHILE STILL OTHERS WILL AVAIL THEMSELVES OF COVERAGE UNDER THE STATE PUBLICLY FINANCED PROGRAM.

IN SUMMARY, I BELIEVE ANY PROPOSAL MUST NOT ONLY ADDRESS MANY OF THE DEFICIENCIES OF OUR DELIVERY SYSTEM, BUT ALSO PRESERVE THE MANY STRENGTHS OUR CURRENT HEALTH CARE SYSTEM OFFERS.

OUR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS CERTAINLY DESERVE A GREAT DEAL OF PRAISE. THANKS TO THEM, AMERICA IS THE MEDICAL MIRACLE WORKER. WE ARE LIVING LONGER THAN EVER BEFORE. WE'VE DEFEATED PLAGUES; TOOTH DECAY AND CAVITIES ARE ALMOST A THING OF THE PAST; WE HAVE MADE MEDICAL ADVANCES THAT CAN SAVE THE LIFE OF EVEN THE SMALLEST, FRAILEST NEWBORN; AND WE HAVE LEARNED HOW TO MAKE SPARE PARTS FOR NEARLY EVERY BODY ORGAN. THE QUALITY OF HEALTH CARE THAT AMERICA'S PROFESSIONALS DELIVER IS ENVIED AND ADMIRERD WORLD WIDE, AND IS SECOND TO NONE.

BUT UNFORTUNATELY, THIS IS NOT ENOUGH. YES, OUR HEALTH CARE IS SUPERIOR TO THAT OF ANY OTHER NATION. BUT, THE CHALLENGE NOW IS TO MAKE THIS CARE AVAILABLE TO ALL AMERICANS -- AND TO LEAVE NO ONE OUT OF THE SYSTEM.

SETTING ASIDE OUR HEALTH POLICY DIFFERENCES WITH THE DEMOCRATS FOR A MOMENT, LET ME TOUCH ON THE SECOND ISSUE PREVENTING PROGRESS ON HEALTH CARE REFORM -- THE DEFICIT.

IN REAL LIFE WE HAVE FISCAL CONSTRAINTS, DEFICITS, AND CRIME AND DRUG PROBLEMS THAT ARE ALSO STRAINING OUR THINNING BUDGET. LIKE I SAID EARLIER, WASHINGTON HAS MANY AGENDAS. THERE IS NO SINGLE MAGICAL SOLUTION THAT WILL ALWAYS RESULT IN A HAPPY ENDING. WE CONTINUE TO MORTGAGE OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE BY FAILING TO ADDRESS THE NUMBER ONE DOMESTIC PROBLEM. WE DON'T HAVE ANY NEW MONEY TO SPEND IN HEALTH, EDUCATION, CRIME -- WHATEVER THE ISSUE. BUT AS SERIOUS AS THE PROBLEM IS, THERE IS NO CONSENSUS ON WHAT TO DO. EVERYONE WANTS MORE WITHOUT GIVING UP ANYTHING. THE ELDERLY TAUGHT US THAT WHEN WE FOUGHT OVER THE CATASTROPHIC HEALTH INSURANCE PROPOSAL. BUT, IF WE ARE TO MAKE ANY PROGRESS SOMETHING AND SOMEONE HAS TO GIVE.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

BY A VOTE OF 50-47, THE SENATE PASSED A SO-CALLED "ECONOMIC GROWTH" BILL, WHICH WILL EVENTUALLY BE VETOED BY THE PRESIDENT-- AS IT SHOULD BE.

THE DEMOCRATS CALL IT A "FAIRNESS" BILL.

WELL IT'S A FAIRNESS BILL, ONLY IF FAIRNESS MEANS THAT MISERY LOVES COMPANY, AND THE PRESENT UNEMPLOYED WANT SEVERAL MILLION MORE TO JOIN THEM.

THE FACT IS THAT 89% OF THE TAX INCREASES IN THE BILL WILL COME STRAIGHT OUT OF THE POCKET OF AMERICAN SMALL BUSINESSMEN AND WOMEN--BUSINESSMEN AND WOMEN WHO WILL SEE THEIR MONEY GO TO UNCLE SAM INSTEAD OF USING IT TO HIRE NEW EMPLOYEES.

THIS IS BECAUSE SMALL BUSINESS, SUCH AS SOLE PROPRIETORS, PARTNERSHIPS, AND SUB-CHAPTER S CORPORATIONS FILE THEIR TAXES AS INDIVIDUALS.

BUT IT'S NOT TOO LATE. IF WE CAN GET BEYOND THE POLITICAL GAMES, IF THE DEMOCRATS WOULD EMBRACE A GROWTH INITIATIVE RATHER THAN A JOB KILLER, WE WOULD HAVE A BILL THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD SIGN IMMEDIATELY. BUT MORE THAN THAT -- IT WOULD DEMONSTRATE THAT CONGRESS CAN ACT RESPONSIBLY, TO THE BENEFIT OF ALL AMERICANS.

BUT, THEN AGAIN, YESTERDAY'S WASHINGTON POST SUMMED UP A FEELING SHARED BY MILLIONS OF AMERICANS. THEY WROTE, "THE RISK OF BAD LEGISLATION THIS SESSION IS MUCH GREATER THAN THE LIKELIHOOD OF ANY GOOD. GO HOME."

BACK TO HEALTH CARE

FINALLY, BACK ON THE SUBJECT OF HEALTH CARE REFORM, WHILE THERE IS OBVIOUSLY MAJOR DISAGREEMENT OVER THE BIG REFORM PROPOSALS, I THINK WE CAN MAKE SOME IMMEDIATE PROGRESS IN OTHER

AREAS THAT WILL RESULT IN MAKING INSURANCE MORE AFFORDABLE AND AVAILABLE FOR THOSE WORKING FOR SMALL BUSINESSES.

BUT EVEN IF WE CAN REACH AGREEMENT ON THE SMALL REFORM PACKAGE OR THE BIG ONE, UNLESS WE CAN ALSO MAKE PROGRESS IN CHANGING THE FUNDAMENTAL BEHAVIOR OF PATIENTS AND PROVIDERS OF HEALTH CARE -- WE WILL REALLY HAVE DONE ONLY HALF OF THE JOB.

PATIENTS HAVE TO START TAKING MORE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEMSELVES, AND PROVIDERS HAVE TO HELP THEM LEARN TO USE THE SYSTEM MORE APPROPRIATELY. PROVIDERS THEMSELVES NEED TO LEARN HOW TO ORGANIZE CARE IN A WAY THAT PROVIDES QUALITY WITH LESS QUANTITY AND FRANKLY HELP US SPEND OUR RESOURCES IN SMARTER WAYS. ITS NOT THAT WE'RE NOT SPENDING ENOUGH -- ITS THAT WE'RE NOT SPENDING IT IN THE RIGHT WAYS.

WE ARE FINALLY SEEING A NEEDED EMPHASIS ON PREVENTION, ON HEALTHY LIFESTYLES, ON PRIMARY CARE. DENTISTS HAVE CLEARLY BEEN AT THE FOREFRONT IN PRESSING FOR PREVENTIVE BEHAVIOR. I AM HOPEFUL THAT OUR FINANCING AND HEALTH MANPOWER TRAINING PROGRAMS WILL BUILD ON THESE EFFORTS.

THE POLITICAL CLIMATE IS RIPE FOR ACTION BECAUSE REFORM HAS BECOME JUST AS CRUCIAL TO THE MIDDLE CLASS AS THE POOR. CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF, THE UNINSURED ARE NOT DOMINATED BY WELFARE RECIPIENTS OR DEADBEATS; MORE THAN 85% OF THE THIRTY-SOME MILLION

UNINSURED AMERICANS ARE WORKERS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS. UNLESS CONGRESS TAKES SOME ACTION, COSTS IN THE MEDICAL MARKETPLACE WILL CONTINUE TO SPEED OUT OF CONTROL, WHILE COVERAGE CONTINUES TO CREEP TO A HALT.

I THINK THAT'S A BITTER PILL NO AMERICAN SHOULD HAVE TO SWALLOW.