

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 2, 1993

The Honorable Robert Dole
Senate Republican Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Leader:

As you know, I share your belief that health reform is and must be a non-partisan issue. It is clear that our constituents want us to work together to pass a long overdue health reform initiative.

For months now, Hillary and representatives from the Administration have held numerous meetings with Senators and Representatives from both parties on the health reform issue. I have been pleased with reports from her and others about how constructive the discussions have been. It has become clear that the vast majority of the Congress wants to contribute to and support a package that stems the tide of skyrocketing health care expenditures while assuring that all Americans have health insurance protection.

While there have been many extremely encouraging signs that we are working with similar health policy goals and approaches to reach those goals, we can do better in developing a closer and more constructive working relationship. I would, therefore, like to take this opportunity to invite you and the Republican Senate Members of your choosing to meet with the First Lady and me as soon as our schedules permit early this month.

I believe these meetings will give us the opportunity to review the options that we have before us to meet our mutual goals of containing costs, providing universal coverage, improving quality, and assuring choice of health care providers. These are daunting but achievable goals that must be met in order to provide health and economic security for all Americans.

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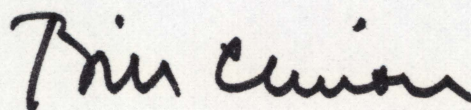
In addition, I have directed Administration representatives to prepare a health care briefing workshop to be offered to Republican and Democratic Members BEFORE the Health Security plan is publicly released later in September. These bipartisan meetings will provide detailed briefings on the health reform policy and the rationale behind it.

The workshop will provide a general outline and philosophy of the proposal by the First Lady, followed by much more specific discussions of the provisions of the plan as they relate to issues of most concern to Members. For example, issues such as (1) cost containment; (2) financing; (3) the role, benefits and responsibilities of businesses; (4) rural health care; (5) how the Medicare and Medicaid populations will be affected; and many others will be discussed in great detail during these workshops.

Members of the Cabinet, White House officials and other key staff within the Administration will conduct these briefings and question and answer sessions. As currently envisioned, the briefings will be offered on a repeated basis starting late in the afternoon on Sunday, September 19, and ending early in the afternoon on Tuesday, September 21. If this concept and timeframe meets with your and Republican Leader Michel's approval, I would like to have my staff meet with your staff to discuss the logistics of these sessions.

There are few issues which offer the opportunity to forge new, bipartisan working alliances as much as health care. It is my hope and expectation that we will develop a plan that both Republicans and Democrats can proudly support. I look forward to hearing from you and House Republican Leader Michel, who has received a similar letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Tim Wirth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.