

Letter to Hillary

Editorial Staff

*The Honorable Hillary Clinton
First Lady of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C.*

June 2, 1993

Dear Hillary:

Our committee met with Dr. Valdez one month ago in the Old Executive Office Building. In that meeting, Dr. Valdez assured us that there was a mandate from the president indicating that there would be "no erosion of gains made by the various professions" in the proposed legislation. According to information that we have recently received, we understand that the task force is examining the concept of specifying which benefits would be mandated but not which provider groups would be mandated under the reform legislation.

We support the concept of "mandated benefits" rather than "mandated providers" in the proposed legislation. But a point of reality in health care cost must be understood. The system is MD based and MD driven, if non-MD providers are desired and not specified, it will not happen. Due to this medical monopoly, we are concerned with the prospect of a medically dominated system from the perspective of the facts which surfaced during the chiropractic profession's decade long antitrust suit with the American Medical Association. In 1987, the Supreme Court of the United States upheld the decision of Appeals Court and Federal District Court by finding the American Medical Association guilty of violating the nation's antitrust laws by engaging in a conspiracy to contain and eliminate chiropractic physicians from mainstream health care.

It is our hope that the statutory language will contain the president's guarantee that an individual who seeks care through any managed care entity (HMO) established or regulated under the president's plan shall have a right to access care and treatment from a doctor of chiropractic through the specified managed care entities and have those costs fully covered as part of the mandated benefits package. This country affords the public legal protection against age discrimination, job discrimination, gender discrimination, et cetera, through the United States Constitution. We urge your task force to consider the public welfare by guaranteeing the patient direct access to the health care of their choice. The insured individual must be afforded the most basic of rights. The right to freedom of choice to select a provider for any of the mandated benefits in accordance with that provider's individual scope of practice as specified by state statute.

A health care system that excludes chiropractic will lose the most effective means of cost containment in health care today. This profession has already proven to be up to 10 times more efficient in delivering quality health care in terms of "cost per case" and "days lost time." Inclusion of chiropractic will assure aggressive competition between provider groups. Exclusion of chiropractic from a "managed competition" based system will result in a loss of one of the most

dynamic elements from the system, that of interprofessional competition for the health care dollar.

My committee and I stand ready to assist you with needed support to move this legislation to successful adoption.

Sincerely,

Stanley B. Heard, DC, chairman National Chiropractic Health Care Advisory Committee

cc: Honorable Bill Clinton, President

Ms. Carol Rasco

Mr. Bruce Lindsey

Mr. Steve Edelstein

Dr. Robert Valdez

*The White House
Washington*

June 4, 1993

Stanley B. Heard, DC

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Dear Stan:

Thank you for your letter in support of "mandated benefits" and the patients' right to choose their providers. Thank you also for the offer of assistance.

Let me assure you that the president's plan will protect choice of provider. As I am sure you are aware, many insurance plans today have limited choice. The president's plan will ensure that the American people have a choice of plans.

Once again, thank you for your concern, and best wishes. It's always good to hear from you.

Sincerely yours,
Hillary Rodham Clinton

JULY 1993