

Congress Approves \$1.75 Million for Chiropractic Demo/Training Projects

Dynamic Chiropractic Staff

On Oct. 21, President Clinton signed into law the 1994 appropriations bill for the Department of Health and Human Services (Pub. Law 103-112). The bill allocates: \$750,000 for multidisciplinary research studies at chiropractic colleges and \$1 million to increase chiropractic's ability to assist in medically underserved rural areas.

The funding is certainly one of the most important chiropractic victories on Capitol Hill. "This landmark decision by Congress represents the culmination of several years of lobbying and hard work by the ACA and representatives of chiropractic colleges across the nation, notably Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport, Iowa," said ACA President Dr. John Pammer.

Demonstration Projects. In October 1992, just prior to the adjournment of the 102nd Congress, the first federal program dedicated solely to chiropractic research demonstration projects was authorized as part of Title VII of the Public Health Service Act. This ACA-drafted initiative established the chiropractic research program that would provide funding to chiropractic colleges for:

Demonstration projects in which chiropractors and physicians collaborate to identify and provide effective treatment for spinal and lower back conditions ... These funds [will] be utilized to carry out a collaborative training and demonstration project between the Consortium for Chiropractic Research [including Palmer Chiropractic University in Davenport, Iowa] and a school of medicine or osteopathic medicine. This project shall address how so-called traditional schools of medicine and chiropractors can cooperate to identify how chiropractic can be utilized to provide effective treatment.

Training Projects. In September of this year, the Senate authorized \$1 million to be used for:

Interdisciplinary training projects...of how the delivery of chiropractic health care can be improved in rural areas, and how the retention and recruitment of chiropractic health care practitioners can be increased in rural areas ... The Committee expects the Consortium for Chiropractic Research to play an integral role in the development of this rural health care initiative in fiscal year 1994, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

Legislative Support. Dr. Pammer identified Senators Kennedy (D-Mass) and Harkin (D-Iowa) as playing key roles in the authorization of the chiropractic research and training funding: "The chiropractic profession really owes them a great deal of gratitude for their support." Dr. Pammer also noted other legislators who played an integral part in the bill's passage: Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), ranking Republican member of the Senate Labor Committee; and Congressmen Neal

Smith (D-Iowa) and Jim Lightfoot (R-Iowa), senior members of the House Appropriation's Committee.

J. Ray Morgan, ACA executive vice president, said representatives of the Public Health Service have already met with ACA and FCER officials to discuss procedures for implementation of the federal research project. "The research is intended to be an ongoing project, and the ACA will be seeking new monies each year," said Mr. Morgan.

According to ACA officials, the passage of the chiropractic language in the HHS Appropriation's Bill will figure heavily in the current debate over national health care reform. "This landmark victory has come at a critically urgent time for the profession," stated ACA Board Chairman Kerwin Winkler, DC. He added, "The passage of this bill will go a long way toward producing the evidence we already know to be true; that chiropractic is a legitimate and effective form of health care that could save this country million upon million of dollars."

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