

NLWJC - Kagan

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**Education - New Hampshire Event
2/17/99 [Healthcare]**

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 17, 1999

HEALTH CARE ROUNDTABLE WITH NEW HAMPSHIRE RESIDENTS

DATE: February 18, 1999
LOCATION: Dover Municipal Building
TIME: 11:15am - 12:05pm
FROM: Bruce Reed

I. PURPOSE

You will discuss with a group of New Hampshire residents the variety of health care challenges currently facing the nation and highlight the initiatives in your FY 2000 budget that address these challenges. You will highlight the long-term care tax credit and contrast targeted tax credits of this kind to the Republicans' proposal for an indiscriminate, across-the-board tax cut.

II. BACKGROUND

You will highlight initiatives in your FY 2000 budget that increase access to health care and improve its quality:

- **Addressing growing long-term care needs.** Your budget includes a historic new initiative to support elderly and disabled Americans with long-term care needs or the family members who care for them. This initiative invests over \$6 billion over five years in long-term care, including a \$1,000 tax credit to compensate for the cost of long-term care services; a new \$625 million National Family Caregiver Program, which will help states provide direct services and support for those caring for elderly family members with long-term care needs; a new proposal to allow states to provide home- and community-based care to people whose income level now qualifies them for nursing-home care under Medicaid; and a national campaign to educate Medicare beneficiaries about long-term care options. You also will praise New Hampshire's efforts to expand community-based care services for Medicaid enrollees and to provide critical information to elderly and chronically ill adults about their long-term care options.
- **Improving economic opportunities for Americans with disabilities.** More than 70 percent of Americans with disabilities are unemployed, often because they face significant barriers to work, such as the risk of losing health care. You have

proposed a series of bold new initiatives to enable people with disabilities to return to work. This five-year, \$3.2 billion initiative includes full funding for the Jeffords-Kennedy-Roth-Moynihan Work Incentives Improvement Act which will enable many workers with disabilities to buy into Medicaid and Medicare; a \$1,000 tax credit to help offset the cost of the services and supports that people with disabilities may need to get and keep a job; and a new regulation to increase the amount that people with disabilities can earn and still maintain Social Security benefits. New Hampshire currently provides community-based services through Medicaid to individuals with disabilities, and in recognition of the State's innovation in this area, the Vice President recently gave the State a grant to help remove barriers to employment for people with disabilities.

- **Helping small businesses provide health care coverage for their employees.** Your budget includes a \$44 million investment in targeted tax credits to increase health care coverage by encouraging small businesses to participate in voluntary purchasing coalitions that provide a variety of health care choices at relatively low cost. This initiative provides a new 10 percent tax credit for small businesses that decide to offer coverage by joining coalitions; encourage private foundations to support coalitions by making their contributions towards these organizations tax-exempt; and offers technical assistance to small business coalitions from the Administrators of the Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan. Governor Shaheen has proposed legislation that creates voluntary small-business purchasing alliances to reduce costs and increase options for small businesses offering health insurance to their employees. She believes that the Administration's proposal will provide needed financing for this effort.
- **Implementing the Children's Health Insurance Program, the largest investment in children's health in a generation.** Your Administration is committed to implementing the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and has developed a national outreach campaign to sign up every child eligible for Medicaid or CHIP coverage. New Hampshire, under Governor Shaheen's leadership, is one of 46 states that already have implemented the CHIP program: the State's program -- Healthy Kids -- provides health insurance to thousands of uninsured New Hampshire children.
- **Protecting patients with a strong, enforceable patients bill of rights.** You again will call on Congress to pass a strong, federally enforceable patients' bill of rights that includes: guaranteed access to needed specialists; access to emergency room services when and where the need arises; and access to a meaningful external appeals process to resolve disputes with health plans. You are already doing everything you can to implement these protections by extending them to the 85 million Americans covered by federal health plans. Governor Shaheen has proposed an HMO Accountability Act to provide similar patient protections.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Governor Jeanne Shaheen
Beth Dixon, Concord, NH
David Robar, New London, NH
Karen Goddard, Nashua, NH
Christine Monteiro, Nottingham, NH
Stephen Gorin, Canterbury, NH

IV. PRESS PLAN

Open Press.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- You will be announced into the auditorium accompanied by Governor Jeanne Shaheen.
- Gov. Shaheen will make welcoming remarks and introduce you.
- You will make remarks.
- Gov. Shaheen will introduce the roundtable participants and begin the discussion.
- Gov. Shaheen will make concluding remarks.
- You will work a ropeline and depart.

VI. REMARKS

To Be Provided by Speechwriting.

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POTENTIAL QUESTIONS AND BACKGROUND FOR ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

BACKGROUND ON BETH DIXON: *Beth Dixon* is a 49 year old mother of four from Concord, New Hampshire who spent the majority of the last year caring for her father, who suffered from Alzheimers and died in March of 1998. When Ms. Dixon's father was first diagnosed with Alzheimers, both her parents moved in with her. She speaks very well about the emotional strain that caregiving for a relative caused, for both her, her mother, and her children. Ms. Dixon was a "sandwich" caregiver, faced with the responsibility of caring for both a parent and her children. She believes that the new \$1000 tax credit, which her parents would have qualified for, and the proposed National Family Caregivers Support Program would have made an incredible difference in the family's quality of life and would have postponed her father's entry into a nursing home.

- **PRESIDENT CLINTON: Question for Beth Dixon:** Beth, your experience as a caregiver and your contribution as an advocate are inspirational. Would the services we're talking about today have made a difference in your circumstances, and in people who faced similar caregiving challenges?

[The PRESIDENT has the opportunity for a follow-up question.]

BACKGROUND ON DAVID ROBAR: *David Robar* is a 34-year-old native of New Hampshire who sustained a spinal cord injury in 1990 which resulted in permanent quadriplegia. Before his accident, he was a world class ski jumper and a potential candidate for the 1988 Olympic Ski Team. At the time of his injury, he returned to school to study business at New England College, in Henniker, NH. After his accident, Mr. Robar returned to school and obtained his B.A. in 1992. He now works part-time in communications for the Granite State Independent Living Center. Currently, the personal attendant benefits he receives through the Medicaid program are what makes it possible for him to work. If he were to work full time, he would make too much to be eligible for Medicaid and lose his personal attendant benefits -- but if he were to pay for his personal attendant services out of pocket, it would cost him over \$40,000 a year, more than he would make working full time. He is frustrated because he feels that he is unable to really use the college education that he worked hard to get, and speaks passionately about his desire to be a fully contributing member of the workforce.

- **PRESIDENT CLINTON: Question for David Robar:** David, we really welcome your support for our long term care and disability initiatives. An economy that has such a low unemployment rate particularly drives home the point that we must take advantage of every American who can make a contribution to the workforce. We must tap every resource. Do you believe that there are many people with disabilities, in New Hampshire and throughout the country, who desperately want to work, but simply cannot afford to run the risk of working without health insurance?

[The PRESIDENT has the opportunity for a follow-up question, possibly on the Patients Bill of Rights.]

BACKGROUND ON KAREN GODDARD: *Karen Goddard*, is a 37 year-old, divorced, single mother of 2 children from Nashua, NH. She is the owner of 2 maternity and children's clothing stores, and has 4 part-time employees. While 3 of her employees are covered under their spouses' health insurance policy, she is currently unable to purchase health insurance for herself or the other employee because of the high cost associated with purchasing individual coverage. Finding a health insurance package that meets their needs is a priority for both Ms. Goddard and her employee, and she is somewhat frustrated by the fact that they have been searching for an affordable insurance option for over four years and have been unable to find one. Ms. Goddard speaks eloquently about the fears and financial difficulties that being uninsured causes, and is enthusiastic about the financial assistance that the small business tax credit would provide, as well as the increased health insurance options that would be associated with participation in a small business purchasing coalition.

- **PRESIDENT CLINTON: Question for Karen Goddard:** Karen, you talked about how you've tried for a long time to find an affordable health insurance option that suits your needs. We're working with Governor Shaheen to make it easier for small business owners to offer health insurance by giving them financial assistance that makes it easier for them to purchase insurance as a group. Do you think having someone work through the administrative processes associated with purchasing health care, as well as getting a small break on the price, would make it easier for you to find a health insurance plan that works for you and your employees?

[GOVERNOR SHAHEEN has the opportunity to ask a follow-up question.]

BACKGROUND ON CHRISTINE MONTERO: *Christine Montero* is a 41 year old woman with four girls who have been insured intermittently for the past 11 years and completely uninsured for 5 years. When one of her daughters was particularly ill, Mrs. Montero took her uninsured child to see the doctor. She received treatment and was advised that her daughter might be eligible for the new CHIP program. After almost immediately following up, she was thrilled to discover that her kids were indeed eligible. Since that time, she has learned that one of her daughters has a serious digestive disorder that will require specialty care that her new CHIP insurance covers. This has provided her with immeasurable relief from worry and she is extremely appreciative for this insurance.

- **PRESIDENT CLINTON: Question for Christine Montero:** One of the greatest challenges we face in administering this new children's health plan is actually locating those who are eligible for this coverage. Your experience illustrates one way (ie: utilizing provider offices) that we can link the program to the population in need, but I was wondering if you can give us some of your own suggestions on where and how best we can locate parents of these children who are eligible for CHIP or Medicaid.

[GOVERNOR SHAHEEN has the opportunity to ask a follow-up question.]

- **PRESIDENT CLINTON: Question for Stephen Gorin:** Steve, I know you've played an active and supportive role in the Governor's work in providing State based patient protections. Some people in Washington have suggested that we should let the States oversee managed care plans and not legislate on the Federal level. Can you tell me why it is important to pass a Federal Patients Bill of Rights?

BACKGROUND ON STEPHEN GORIN: Stephen Gorin is a professor in the Social Work Program at Plymouth State College in New Hampshire and is the President of the New Hampshire Consumer Action Committee, the State's most visible patient advocacy organization. Dr. Gorin hosts a biweekly radio program on WKXL-AM/FM in Concord, NH.