

slow the growth of home health spending. In fact, the Medicare actuary now reports that the rate of increase in Medicare spending on home health has slowed to just 5.4 percent from previous rates that exceeded 25 percent.

These efforts to root fraud and abuse out of the home health industry build on my administration's longstanding efforts to combat fraud and abuse. Since 1993, we have assigned more Federal prosecutors and FBI agents to fight health care fraud than ever before. As a result, convictions have gone up a full 240 percent, and we have saved some \$20 billion in health care claims. The Kassebaum-Kennedy legislation I signed into law created—for the first time

ever—a stable funding source to fight fraud and abuse. This year's historic Balanced Budget Act, which ensured the life of the Medicare Trust Fund until at least 2010, also gave us an array of new weapons in our fight to keep scam artists and fly-by-night health care providers out of Medicare and Medicaid.

I would like to thank the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice for their efforts to combat fraud and abuse in the home health industry.

We will continue to work to ensure that we do everything possible to combat fraud and abuse in the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus

January 13, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period October 1 to November 30, 1997. The previous submission covered events in the period covering August 1 to September 30, 1997.

U.S. diplomacy to advance progress toward a Cyprus settlement continued at an intense pace during the reporting period. Special Presidential Emissary for Cyprus Richard C. Holbrooke, Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas J. Miller, and other U.S. officials met in the United States and overseas with key participants in the process. Ambassadors Holbrooke and Miller met extensively with Cypriot President Clerides and Turkish Cypriot leader Denktash during their visits to the United States. The two U.S. Envoys also traveled to the region in October to meet with the Turkish and (in the case of Ambassador Miller) Greek leadership to follow up on discussions begun with Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright at the U.N. General Assembly in September, and again in November when Ambassador Holbrooke brought the two Cypriot leaders together in the buffer zone for an informal exchange of views on achieving a Cyprus solution.

Also during November, Ambassador Holbrooke moderated a privately sponsored con-

ference of business leaders from both Cypriot communities in Greece and Turkey to discuss the mutual benefits of the economic cooperation in the region. Ambassador Miller and U.S. Ambassador to Cyprus Kenneth C. Brill also participated.

Senior U.S. officials met extensively during the reporting period with officials of the European Union, EU member states, and others to support Cypriot EU accession prospects and to encourage stronger EU-Turkish relations.

Tensions rose on the island during the October and November (respectively) Greek/Greek Cypriot military exercise NIKIFOROS and the Turkish/Turkish Cypriot military exercise TOROS. The exercises effectively ended the May 9 moratorium on overflights of Cyprus by combat aircraft. Interceptions by Turkish fighters of the Greek Defense Minister's transport aircraft during the NIKIFOROS exercise further exacerbated tensions in the region.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 14.