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the doctors in America are for. Well, I think if people take a good look and those who hadn't made up their mind yet in the House listened to the voices up here, they will hear there's plenty of doctors who believe that the Fletcher bill is the proper alternative, so patients get the quality of care they need without the fear of losing health insurance, without the fear that businesses, large and small, might decide rather than being sued all the time and, therefore, drop provisions for health care in total.

That's something we don't want in our society. We want more people covered, not less. We want the cost of medicine not to be driven up by unnecessary litigation. The Fletcher bill provides safeguards.

Now there's another issue that's important, and that is the external review process. It's an incredibly important part of any medical system—future medical system, if we want it to work. And that process basically says, if you're a patient and you and your doc don't agree with the decisions made by the health insurance company, that you ought to be able to appeal to a panel of doctors. And if the panel of doctors rule in your favor, the insurance company is obligated to move forward. If not, it becomes a cause of action in a court of law.

I just had the opportunity of meeting with Helen Barnes, a nurse-practitioner from Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Thank you for being here, Helen. She was in an automobile accident, and ever since, she's suffered severe muscular problems in her back and her neck. So she and her doc thought that she ought to have a mammoplasty to ease her pain. Her HMO denied her request for surgery. She then appealed the decision to an external medical review process. They ruled in her favor.

She took her case to an objective review process, a review panel, and they said she and her doc were right. And so she's going to receive the surgery she needs this January. I said, "Why not sooner?" She said, "Because she can't find time to get off work sooner." [*Laughter*]

But nevertheless, the process works. And it's so important that we have a tight external review process, one that addresses patients' needs, not the needs of people who want to sue everybody; one who's focused on the patients of America so that they can take their claims to a panel of experts—medical experts, and have their problems addressed as quickly and as soon as possible.

The issue we ought to be discussing is quality of care for patients. That's the whole focus of medicine. And that ought to be the focus of any legislation that comes out of the United States Congress. And the Fletcher bill that is now being debated on the House floor represents the kind of legislation that my administration can support, that thousands of doctors across America support, and I believe most Americans will support when they hear the facts and the differences between the two pieces of legislation that are now being debated on the House floor.

I want to thank our doctor friends for being here. I want to thank you for your service to your respective communities. The docs in America really are a part of—medical professionals are a part of really what makes this country great. We've got the best health care in the world—by far, the best health care in the world—and we've got to make sure that any legislation, any laws passed out of Washington, enhances the health care for America and doesn't hurt it. And I believe the Fletcher bill will help and enhance the great medical care that we have in our country.

Thank you all for coming. Thank you for the endorsement of a good piece of legislation, and may God bless your work, and God bless America.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Priscilla Perry, M.D., representative, American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery.

Statement on Action by the House Ways and Means Committee on the Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

July 11, 2001

I commend the House Ways and Means Committee for passing legislation today that includes key elements of my Faith-Based and

Community Initiatives. This clears the way for consideration by the full House of Representatives. This legislation will stimulate more charitable giving and support faith-based and community organizations in their efforts to help those in need. I will continue to work on a bipartisan basis with Members of the House and the Senate to implement my Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

Memorandum on Implementing Government Reform

July 11, 2001

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Implementing Government Reform

Throughout the campaign and in my Budget, I have called for "active, but limited" Government: one that empowers States, cities, and citizens to make decisions; ensures results through accountability; and promotes innovation through competition. Thus, if reform is to help the Federal Government adapt to a rapidly changing world, its primary objectives must be a Government that is:

- Citizen-centered—not bureaucracy centered;
- Results-oriented—not process-oriented; and
- Market-based—actively promoting, not stifling, innovation and competition.

In order to establish and implement Government reform throughout the executive branch, I hereby direct the following:

1. *Establish Chief Operating Officers.*

Each agency head shall designate a Chief Operating Officer, who shall be the senior official with agency-wide authority on behalf of the Secretary or agency head. The Chief Operating Officer, the equivalent of the Deputy Secretary, shall report directly to the agency head and shall be responsible for:

(a) implementing the President's and agency head's goals and the agency's mission;
(b) providing overall organization management to improve agency performance;
(c) assisting the agency head in promoting Government reform, developing strategic plans, and measuring results; and
(d) overseeing agency-specific efforts to integrate performance and budgeting, expand competitive sourcing, strengthen their workforce, improve financial management, advance e-government, apply information policy and technology policies, and other Government-wide management reforms.

2. *Implement Additional Agency Reforms.*

Each agency head shall identify and implement additional changes within the agency that will promote the principles of government reform.

3. *Establishment of President's Management Council.*

In order to advise and assist the President in ensuring that Government reform is implemented throughout the executive branch, I hereby establish the President's Management Council ("Council"). The Council shall comprise:

(a) The Deputy Director, Office of Management and Budget;
(b) The Chief Operating Officers from the following agencies:
(1) Department of State;
(2) Department of the Treasury;
(3) Department of Defense;
(4) Department of Justice;
(5) Department of the Interior;
(6) Department of Agriculture;
(7) Department of Commerce;
(8) Department of Labor;
(9) Department of Health and Human Services;
(10) Department of Housing and Urban Development;
(11) Department of Transportation;
(12) Department of Energy;
(13) Department of Education; and
(14) Department of Veterans Affairs.
(c) The following central management agency representatives:
(1) Director of the Office of Personnel Management;
(2) Administrator of General Services;
(d) Chief Operating Officers of the following agencies:
(1) Environmental Protection Agency;