



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

THE SECRETARY

August 26, 1993

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Hillary:

As the unveiling hour of health care reform approaches, I write to share with you several positions which the Department of Education seeks to be included in the final proposal. Three key areas are of critical importance to the education community: comprehensive school health education, school-based or school-linked health services and health coverage for chronically ill or disabled children. Though these components are currently being developed as part of the proposed reform package and we have been working closely with the Task Force and the Department of Health and Human Services on these issues, I wanted to communicate our initial recommendations to you personally. The enclosed paper provides a beginning analysis of our proposals.

I, as you, believe that investing in our children and preventing the onset of health problems is a national priority. For this reason, we strongly support the development of both comprehensive school health education programs and school-based and school-linked services in high-poverty schools. Intensive and interactive health education programs designed to reduce risk-taking behavior have the promise to improve the health status of children. School-linked and school-based health services can play an important role in improving access to health services for children in high-poverty schools. In both of these areas, we believe it essential that the Department of Education be a full partner in the planning and administration of the programs in order to ensure that these programs are fully coordinated with the life of the schools.

The third issue that is of tremendous concern to the education community, is coverage for the health-related needs of children with disabilities. Currently, many children with disabilities lack adequate health care coverage, due to a variety of reasons, and much of the responsibility of providing health services to this population falls on the schools, due to the mandates of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. We believe that the health needs of children with disabilities should be covered within a coherent, comprehensive and accountable system and in a manner that address prevention as well as remediation. To meet this goal, we have proposed two policy options for the consideration of the Task Force. The first is that the criteria

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for eligibility for long term care be designed to include moderately to severely disabled children. The second is to offer a supplemental insurance package to school districts and other agencies to cover the health-related services that they are mandated to provide. These proposals are detailed in the enclosed paper.

I welcome an opportunity to personally meet with you, and members of the health care reform working group, to discuss these recommendations further. I applaud your vision and dedication to this historic endeavor. Know that I am with you every step of the way and will lend my support to see that health care reform becomes a reality.

Yours sincerely,



Richard W. Riley

Enclosure

cc: Carol Rasco
Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy

Donna Shalala
Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services

Ira Magaziner
Senior Advisor to the President for Policy Development