

Statement on the Kaiser Family Foundation Report on the Patients' Bill of Rights

April 22, 1998

Today the Kaiser Family Foundation released a new report that confirms our longstanding belief that the cost of the Quality Commission's Patients' Bill of Rights, which I have endorsed, is modest and well worth the protections it would provide. By affirming the Congressional Budget Office's (CBO) estimates, the Kaiser report convincingly rebuts the scare tactics that some have used to undermine bipartisan efforts in the Congress to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights this year.

Many Americans today lack the protections necessary to ensure high quality health care. They may not be able to see the specialists they need or to get emergency care wherever and whenever a medical emergency arises. They may not be able to talk freely with doctors and nurses about all the medical options available, not only the cheapest. They may have no place to go to present grievances about their health care. The Quality Commission's Patients' Bill of

Rights guarantees Americans these and other commonsense protections.

The Kaiser report reaffirms recent estimates by the CBO that these protections would increase health insurance premiums less than one percent (less than \$3 per family per month). The improvement in the quality of health care that will result from these protections is more than worth the very modest premium increases projected by both Kaiser and CBO.

This report again shows the utter groundlessness of claims that a Patients' Bill of Rights will significantly increase health care costs. With this new information, there is no excuse left for inaction. I therefore call on Congress again to send me legislation that gives Americans the health care protections they need and deserve. I look forward to working with Members on both sides of the aisle to ensure that we pass a strong Patients' Bill of Rights this year.

Statement on House Action on Campaign Finance Reform

April 22, 1998

I am very pleased that the House Republican leadership will heed the call of congressional reformers and allow a vote on campaign finance reform. I strongly support the bipartisan legislation offered by Representatives Christopher Shays and Marty Meehan, which is the best chance in a generation for real reform. Similar legislation already has the support of a majority of Senators, yet it has been blocked by a minor-

ity on procedural grounds. Now every Member of the House of Representatives has a responsibility to vote for this measure to ban large soft money contributions, improve disclosure, and restrict backdoor campaign spending. A vote for bipartisan campaign finance reform will be a vote to strengthen our democracy and give ordinary voters a stronger voice.