

Across the Nation we've seen a great outpouring of support for adding such a prescription drug benefit. And yet I'm increasingly concerned that efforts in Congress are bogging down. One reason for this is clear: The pharmaceutical industry has unleashed a shameless, scorched-earth campaign to thwart the will of the American people.

An industry-funded group calling itself Citizens for Better Medicare—can you believe that?—has flooded the airwaves with negative ads against our plan. Just this week we learned that the drug companies have enlisted nearly 300 hard-gun lobbyists, more than one for every two Members of Congress, and paid them to do everything in their power to block all meaningful reforms. All told, the drug industry has spent a staggering \$236 million on its lobbying efforts. These millions would be a lot better spent on research for new medicines.

The pharmaceutical industry is pushing Congress to adopt a private insurance program rather than a Medicare prescription drug benefit. Insurers, themselves, however, say this won't work, and they won't participate. Just today we learned that the State of Nevada is using a private insurance model that's very similar to the plan passed by the Republican majority in the House of Representatives last week. Not surprisingly, it has not found one single qualified insurer willing to participate.

You have to give it to the insurance companies; they have been honest here. They have said that the Republican plan won't work. It's a plan designed for those who make the drugs, not for the seniors who need to take them.

So today I call on Congress to reject that approach and the reckless campaign of narrow special interests, and act together in the public interest. We need a prescription drug benefit that works for seniors and people with disabilities, not just for the pharmaceutical industry.

A few weeks ago I put forth a good-faith proposal to do just that. I said that if Congress will agree to pass a plan that offers affordable Medicare prescription drug coverage to all seniors and people with disabilities, while protecting our hard-won fiscal

discipline, then I will sign a marriage penalty relief law of equal size.

At this time of year it's natural that we begin to think ahead to election day, but let's keep in mind, as well, the spirit of common purpose we just celebrated on Independence Day. That's the spirit I hope Members of Congress will bring back to our Nation's Capital when they return to work Monday. At a time when America is once again bursting with abundance, there shouldn't be a limit on what we can achieve.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Executive Order 13162—Federal Career Intern Program

July 6, 2000

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 3301 and 3302 of title 5, United States Code, and in order to provide for the recruitment and selection of exceptional employees for careers in the public sector, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. There is hereby constituted the Federal Career Intern Program (Program). The purpose of the Program is to attract exceptional men and women to the Federal workforce who have diverse professional experiences, academic training, and competencies, and to prepare them for careers in analyzing and implementing public programs. "Career Intern" is a generic term, and agencies may use occupational titles as appropriate.

Sec. 2. The Program is another step in the Administration's effort to recruit the highest caliber people to the Federal Government, develop their professional abilities, and retain them in Federal departments and agencies. Cabinet secretaries and agency administrators should view the Program as complementary to existing programs that provide career enhancement opportunities for Federal employees, and departments and agencies are encouraged to identify and make use of those programs, as well as the

new Program, to meet department and agency needs.

Sec. 3. (a) The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) shall develop appropriate merit-based procedures for the recruitment, screening, placement, and continuing career development of Career Interns.

(b) In developing those procedures, the OPM shall provide for such actions as deemed appropriate to assure equal employment opportunity and the application of appropriate veterans' preference criteria.

Sec. 4. (a) A successful candidate shall be appointed to a position in Schedule B of the excepted service at the GS-5, 7, or 9 (and equivalent) or other trainee level appropriate for the Program, unless otherwise approved by the OPM. The appointment shall not exceed 2 years unless extended by the Federal department or agency, with the concurrence of the OPM, for up to 1 additional year.

(b) Tenure for a Career Intern shall be governed by the following principles and policies:

- (1) Assigned responsibilities shall be consistent with a Career Intern's competencies and career interests, and the purposes of the Program.
- (2) Continuation in the Program shall be contingent upon satisfactory performance by the Career Intern throughout the internship period.
- (3) Except as provided in subsections (4) and (5) of this section, service as a Career Intern confers no rights to further Federal employment in either the competitive or excepted service upon the expiration of the internship period.
- (4) Competitive civil service status may be granted to a Career Intern who satisfactorily completes the internship and meets all other requirements prescribed by the OPM.
- (5) Within an agency, an employee who formerly held a career or career-conditional appointment immediately before entering the Career Intern Program, and who fails to complete the Career Intern Program for reasons unrelated to misconduct or suitability, shall be placed in a career or career-conditional position in the current

agency at no lower grade or pay than the one the employee left to accept the position in the Career Intern Program.

Sec. 5. A Career Intern shall participate in a formal program of training and job assignments to develop competencies that the OPM identifies as core to the Program, and the employing agency identifies as appropriate to the agency's mission and needs.

Sec. 6. The OPM shall prescribe such regulations as it determines necessary to carry out the purpose of this order.

Sec. 7. The OPM shall provide oversight of the Program.

Sec. 8. Executive Order 12596 of May 7, 1987, is revoked.

Sec. 9. *Judicial Review.* This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch. It does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable in law or equity, by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers or employees, or any other person.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
July 6, 2000.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., July 11, 2000]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 10, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on July 12.

Remarks on Departure for State College, Pennsylvania, and an Exchange With Reporters

July 10, 2000

Home Heating Oil Reserve

The President. Good afternoon. I want to say a few words in a moment about Togo West and Hershel Gober and the direction of the Department of Veterans Affairs and its mission. But first, I'd like to make one brief announcement.

Since March, I have asked Congress to establish a home heating oil reserve in the Northeast to reduce the chance that future shortages will hurt consumers, as they did last winter. Congress recently, again, has