



Committee for National Health Insurance

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 (In process of formation)

August 31, 1973

Mrs. Albert Lasker, President,
Albert & Mary Lasker Foundation,
29 Beekman Place,
New York, New York 10022

Dear Mary:

As you may know, the UAW is presently engaged in collective bargaining with the major companies in the automotive and agricultural implement industries but I wanted to take a few moments out to alert you to the current situation on national health insurance legislation.

We expect several events to happen beginning in September which will help to move forward the national health insurance issue. The House Health Subcommittee, with Paul Rogers of Florida as Chairman, will hold hearings on national health insurance proposals. The Administration will introduce its new version of a national health insurance plan. And Senator Long will introduce his proposal for federalization of Medicaid along with catastrophic health insurance coverage through the Social Security system.

These are important events in the future of national health insurance in America, but we cannot let events shape our efforts. Accordingly, as you know, CNHI and the Health Security Action Council have been developing State and local coalitions all across the country whose members share our commitment to a real health security program, and intend to make their viewpoint known. The members include representatives of the more than 50 national organizations which have endorsed S.3 and H.R.22.

We do not know when the issue of national health insurance will be finally resolved. But we are determined that it be settled on the basis of a genuine health security program that deals realistically and meaningfully with the flaws in the present system. The piecemeal approaches being put forward elsewhere invite further chaos in health care.

We are engaged in this struggle for as long as it takes to get a good health security law and not something that will only make matters worse.

I intend to testify in the House Health Subcommittee hearings to urge that they focus on the problems of consumers in the health system so that national health insurance serves the interests of consumers equally as well as physicians and hospitals. I hope that you might find time to write to Representative Rogers and to other members of the Subcommittee, whose names I am enclosing, to let them know your own feelings.

As the legislative picture becomes clearer, it is my intention to convoke a meeting of our full Committee to plan future steps. In the meantime, I hope you will send along any recommendations you may have. We need the benefit of your thinking as this great issue begins moving again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leonard". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Leonard Woodcock, Chairman,
COMMITTEE FOR NATIONAL
HEALTH INSURANCE.

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Encl.