

The problem is, it's like justice. Health care delayed can sometimes be health care denied. That's one of the biggest problems. And I have heard all these chilling stories, I'm sure you have. By the time people get their procedures approved, it's too late. And the emergency room thing is really unconscionable, particularly—it would apply, like in New Hampshire where most of the communities aren't very big, it would apply more if you were visiting Boston or something and you got hit by a car and you went to the nearest emergency room and they say, "I'm sorry. The emergency room your HMO will reimburse for is 15 miles in the other direction." So we have got to fix this.

Now, the opposition says it will raise the cost of health care. It will but not much, maybe 8 or 10 bucks a year or something. It would be worth it to you; one trip to the emergency room, it would be worth it to you.

So I think—I can't tell you how important I think this is. I think you're going to have more and more and more of these horror stories unless we pass a national bill which will, at a very minimum, protect the State's ability to do what Governor Shaheen wants to do and say everybody has got a right to the nearest emergency room, to a continuation of treatment, to see a specialist, and to know what all their medical options are.

And again I say, this should absolutely not be a partisan issue. It has been in Washington because of the interplay of the organized interest groups up there, but it's not out in America. And it shouldn't be. You just keep plugging; we'll get there this year, I think.

That is our health agenda for this session of Congress. You see it here embodied in these five panelists and then what the Governor has worked to do on the children's health programs and other things. I would very much like to see the spirit in the country and in Washington, DC, that I felt here in New Hampshire so many years ago when I first came here, to take these health care issues and sort of put them beyond partisan politics and put the people and the families of this country and their interests first.

If we succeed this year in doing that, all of you can know that your presence here made a difference and especially the panel-

ists. I think we should give them one more big hand. [*Applause*]

Thank you very, very much, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The roundtable began at 11:30 a.m. in the auditorium at the Dover Municipal Building. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Will Boc of Dover, NH.

Statement on Senator Richard H. Bryan's Decision Not To Seek Reelection

February 18, 1999

Throughout his career, Senator Richard Bryan has been a staunch advocate and tireless champion of the people of Nevada. He has been an ardent protector of Nevada's environment and has been a leader in preserving Nevada's lands and treasures. Senator Bryan has played a critical role in promoting rigorous health and safety standards for America's children and consumers. As a distinguished member of the Finance Committee, Senator Bryan has consistently been recognized for his leadership in promoting fiscal responsibility and has helped ensure a brighter future for Nevadans and all Americans. While his decision to retire must be somewhat bittersweet, I know that he will continue to fight for what he believes in and will continue to be a proponent for America's progress. Hillary and I send our best regards to Dick and his family for every future success and happiness.

Remarks at a State Democratic 100 Club Dinner in Manchester, New Hampshire

February 18, 1999

Thank you. I want to thank you for a typically reticent Yankee welcome tonight. [*Laughter*] It is wonderful to be back. I have very much enjoyed being with Governor Shaheen and with Bill today, and we've had a lot of time to visit. I want you to know that it gives me an enormous amount of pleasure and pride to see the Governor at her task, to know the victories that you have