

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 15, 1994

The Honorable Marilyn Lloyd
253 Joel Solomon Federal Building
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37401

Dear Congresswoman Lloyd:

Thank you for forwarding the letter from your constituents, Don and Freda Varnell, about the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system. Their experiences demonstrate why we need health care reform so desperately.

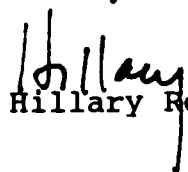
Today, the VA health care system must overcome numerous regulatory and financial barriers to serve our veterans. The current VA system must contend, for example, with prohibitions against receiving reimbursement from private insurance, complex eligibility rules, and restrictive personnel and contracting requirements.

We recognize that, with reform, the VA system can provide the high quality, affordable health care that our nation's veterans deserve. Under the President's plan, veterans will be able to enroll in VA health plans that provide the comprehensive package of benefits guaranteed to all Americans as well as additional services that target the particular health needs of veterans. Veterans with service-connected disabilities or low incomes receive all of these services at no cost to them. Those veterans who do not enroll in a VA health plan may continue to receive the supplemental services that they are eligible to receive today, such as hearing aids and long-term care.

The President's plan prepares the VA system for its role in the new system by investing over \$3 billion over a three year period to modernize and improve the VA system. In addition, for the first time, the VA will be able to collect Medicare and private insurance payments. Finally, unnecessary and burdensome regulations will be reduced, freeing VA hospitals and doctors to concentrate on patients rather than paperwork.

Thank you again for sharing the experiences of your constituents. I look forward to continuing to work with you in the coming weeks.

Sincerely yours,


Hillary Rodham Clinton