

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM FOR CAROL RASCO AND MAGGIE WILLIAMS

THROUGH: JOHN PODESTA
FROM: JIM DORSKIND
DATE: January 25, 1995
SUBJECT: HEALTH CARE REFORM INFORMATION CENTER

After conferring at length with Jennifer Klein about the Health Care Reform Information Center, and in view of the dramatic drop in the volume of mail in this area in recent months, we agree that we should close the Center. We propose folding its responsibilities back into the Presidential Correspondence Office, but continuing to process the mail separately and to maintain the file of personal stories.

If either of you has any objection to closing the Center in an orderly fashion and reassigning the work, as indicated above, please let me know by Monday, January 30, 1995, at noon. Otherwise, Jennifer and I will begin the administrative process of closing the Center. Thanks for your consideration.

We anticipate that you will agree, but thought it might be useful for you to have the following facts as you evaluate our decision:

- * Cost Savings: Although we have reduced the original forty-three telephone lines to seventeen and have decreased the amount of space used by the Center, we can save substantial additional sums on space rental and telephone costs by closing it.
- * Volume of Mail: Recently the amount of health care mail to the President has been fluctuating between about 75 to a few hundred letters each day. First Lady correspondence has seen an even more dramatic reduction in volume in mail on this issue.
- * Telephone Bank: The volume of calls on health care reform has dropped to a trickle.
- * Personal stories: The Center is still collecting and filing poignant stories from citizens. Although I believe this resource will be invaluable as the 104th Congress picks up the health care reform debate this year, we can continue to maintain it here.
- * Reduced Need for Specific Responses: When the

Administration first released the Health Security Act, we all agreed that it was important to respond to letters from Americans in specific detail because it was "The President's plan." Accordingly, the Center helped prepare 53 different letters, each addressing specific concerns that Americans had with the Administration's proposal. However, it does not appear that such detailed responses are appropriate while Congress is debating the issue and considering a variety of health care proposals.

* Better Allocation of Staff: This Department recently sustained additional staffing cuts, making it critical to reallocate those resources currently, but necessarily, committed to the full-time, off-site health care reform operation.

In sum, it makes sense to fold the health care mail function back into the Presidential and First Lady Correspondence Units, have the phones answered by the White House Comment Line volunteers, and maintain the personal story function here.

This approach will not only save money, but it will also allow for much better use of the other resources now committed to the Center, while permitting us to continue to give this mail and the personal stories special attention.

cc: Jennifer Klein
Harold Ickes
Jennifer McCarthy
Andrea Rutledge

INTERNATIONAL
BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS
AFL-CIO



December 29, 1994

Mr. John Podesta
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear John:

As you may know, I left Planned Parenthood last year and will be beginning 1995 as director of the newly combined legislative, political action and PAC programs at the Teamsters Union. The new year promises to be a beast for all of us, and before it gets too crazy, I'd like to come spend a few minutes getting reacquainted and touching base on a couple of issues.

I'll give you a call right after the first to see what is possible. If you want to reach for me instead, the best numbers are 202/624-8742 and 202/898-0422.

Sincerely,

Bill

William W. Hamilton Jr.
Director, Legislative
and Political Action

8/27/42

yes
no
4:15