

EXECUTIVE (2)

HEG
F14/FG23-8

February 2, 1971

Dear Mr. Sarbanes:

This will acknowledge and thank you for your January 29 letter to the President concerning Fiscal Year 1972 Budget proposals for services in HEW medical facilities.

You may be assured your presentation on behalf of the Public Health Service Hospital in Baltimore will be brought to the President's attention and shared with those who are involved in a continuing review of health care needs.

With cordial regards,

Sincerely,

William E. Timmons
Assistant to the President

Honorable Paul S. Sarbanes
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

bcc: w/incoming to Bill Gifford for further handling. ^{sent} 2-3

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SEARCH SLIP

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

January 29, 1971

PRESERVATION COPY

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to express my deep concern over the closing of the U. S. Public Health Hospitals proposed in the budget submitted today to the Congress. As I understand it, the Administration intends to close out the eight Public Health Service Hospitals and the thirty outpatient clinics in Fiscal 1972 and will seek to shift the burden of furnishing health care now being met by these facilities to other providers of medical services.

While I can only speak in detail about the activities of the Public Health Service Hospital in Baltimore, I do believe, based on the Baltimore situation, that the proposed closings are an action directly contradicting in many respects your State of the Union address on January 22, 1971. In that address you set forth the improving of America's health care as your fourth great goal and specifically mentioned the need to get more medical care resources into those areas that have not been adequately served. The Baltimore Public Health Service Hospital, in addition to providing medical services for those classes of people for whom the Federal Government has assumed medical care responsibility, has been involved in planning with community groups for the establishment of a comprehensive prepaid health program in an inner city area where the availability of private medical services is almost non-existent. Furthermore, the hospital has been actively engaged in training medical personnel and has been carrying out your admonition for new programs to encourage better preventive medicine by establishing a unique Health Evaluation Center. All of these activities are described in greater detail in the enclosed letter which was sent some weeks ago to Secretary Richardson when rumors about the proposed closings first became public.

In your State of the Union address you also indicated that you would ask for an extra \$100 million to launch an intensive campaign

The President

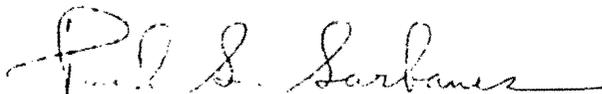
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to find a cure for cancer. The Baltimore Cancer Research Center, a clinical facility of the National Cancer Institute, is located at the Public Health Service Hospital in Baltimore. This research center has been doing outstanding work in the chemotherapy treatment of cancer and is an integral part of the research effort being carried on by the National Cancer Institute. Over a period of time outstanding research facilities and, more importantly, an outstanding research team have been developed, all of which are now jeopardized by the proposed action concerning the Hospital. Surely a total national commitment to achieve the goal of conquering the dread disease of cancer requires keeping this major cancer research unit in being.

Finally, I am particularly disturbed by the lack of in-depth study by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and the Office of Management and Budget which seems to lie behind this decision to close the Public Health Service Hospitals. Only after the decision had apparently been reached did the Department send out fact-finding teams to look into and evaluate the particular situation in each area. At no time has there been consultation by the Department with local health planning agencies who are charged with responsibility for comprehensive health planning under the "partnership for health" concept contained in Federal legislation.

The proposed closings raise, I believe, very substantial questions as to how the Federal Government shall proceed in achieving the highly desirable goal of improving America's health care. I very much hope the Administration will recognize these questions and re-evaluate the position it has taken on the Public Health Service Hospitals.

Respectfully,



Paul S. Sarbanes
4th, Maryland

PSS/dr
Enclosure