

Correspondence – American Hospital Association

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American Hospital Association

JOHN ALEXANDER McMAHON
President

August 8, 1974

Dear Governor Carter

Thank you for your letter of July 24. I appreciate very much your interest in soliciting the American Hospital Association's views on what issues should be addressed by political candidates this year. On behalf of AHA's 7,000 member institutions, their Trustees, medical staff members, administrative officers and all their employees, I thank you.

Perhaps the most important public issue before the hospital field at this time is the changing relationship between the public and private sectors in health care. The hospital field, and indeed the whole health field, face the problems of opening the doors of access to health care services to the unserved and underserved of our society, and face the problems of adequate financing of health and hospital care. In the face of these problems the respective roles of government and private voluntary hospitals are challenged. While nationally, hospitals account for more than three percent of the gross national product, the individual hospitals around the country are local, community institutions whose ability to provide care to the populations they serve is tied closely to their freedom to respond to the different and peculiar health problems their communities face.

While government in its role of regulator, and in its role of purchaser of hospital services, has tremendous responsibilities, political office holders should be mindful not to destroy the private initiative which has made our country's health care system the best in the world. In re-examining the involvement of government and the private sector in health care, the issues of who should set national, state and local public policy in the health areas is important, the issues of financing are immediate, and the many questions of regulation are complex.

Governor Carter/2

8/8/74

As political office holders at the federal level face the many questions involved in national health insurance, as state government officials consider the issues of certificate-of-need legislation and hospital rate review legislation, and at the local level as the issues of planning and development of hospital programs are discussed, we all must be cautious to preserve the voluntary, pluralistic characteristics of our health care system which have made it as excellent as it is today.

I would suggest that serious discussion of the many facets of the issue of the respective roles of the public and private sectors in health care is a most serious and important topic for political candidates to address.

The AHA has given careful study to all of the matters discussed herein, and would be pleased to make its conclusions known to any candidate interested. Moreover, I would welcome the opportunity, mentioned in the last paragraph of your letter, to discuss these matters with you personally. Unfortunately my schedule will not permit a visit to Atlanta in the next several weeks, although I do plan to be in your city on October 31. While that is, of course, too late for this fall's campaign, I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you at your convenience at any time in the late afternoon of October 30 or any time the following day. Knowing that your interest in the Democratic Party will continue, such a discussion might prove mutually beneficial.

Sincerely yours



John Alexander McMahon

Governor Jimmy Carter
1974 Campaign Chairman
Democratic National Committee
P. O. Box 1524
Atlanta, Georgia 30301

August 15, 1974

Mr. John Alexander McMahon,
President
American Hospital Association
840 North Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, Ill. 60611

Dear John:

Thank you for your letter of August 8. I share your own concern that quality health services be readily available to our afflicted and disadvantaged citizens. I am enclosing our issue analysis paper on health care which may be of interest to you.

I would welcome the opportunity to talk with you further when you are in Atlanta. You may wish to contact Mrs. Mary Beasley, my Appointments Secretary, at (404) 656-1720.

I appreciate your interest in this matter.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

JC/scg
Enclosure



American Hospital Association

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President

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