

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2101

1991 OCT 24 AM 9:28

October 21, 1991

Mr. John E. Flynn
Deputy City Clerk
Office of the City Clerk, City Hall
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Dear Mr. Flynn:

Thank you for taking the time to write regarding the current problems in the Medicare system and the Administration's proposed cuts in benefits for the elderly and disabled.

Medicare has always had a special meaning for me and my family. When I was first elected to the Senate in 1962, Congress was in the final stages of the long and successful battle to provide insurance for the elderly against the intolerable burden of serious illness. President Kennedy was proud of his role as the first President to propose Medicare. To him, it was the unfinished business of Social Security and he worked for it and fought for it as Senator and as President.

The enactment of Medicare marked the dawn of a new day for health care in America. From the beginning, in 1965, Medicare has stood as a solemn promise by Congress and the federal government that the miracles of modern medicine will not be denied to our senior citizens and that their golden years will be free from the fear of financial ruin because of catastrophic illness.

The Administration, however, has attempted to break that promise. Cuts enacted by the Bush Administration will cost Medicare beneficiaries \$10 billion over the next 5 years. Despite changes enacted in 1990 as part of the 5 year budget agreement, the President's Fiscal Year 1992 budget once again proposed significant deficit reduction for Federal programs serving the elderly and disabled, including an additional \$25 billion cut in the Medicare program over the next five years. This cut, which comes on top of the significant Medicare cuts of the past few years, will further increase the cost of health care for the elderly.

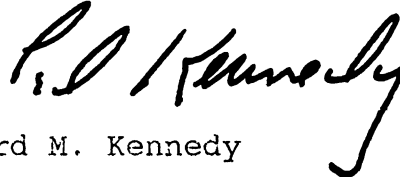
I will continue to resist these unfair budget reductions. In addition to the need to resist unfair cuts in Medicare benefits, we need to move forward to address continuing gaps in the protection for our senior citizens. The most important is

our national failure to protect senior citizens against the high cost of long-term care, whether that care is provided in a nursing home or a senior citizen's own home.

I will soon be introducing a comprehensive long-term care program to fill this gap. If enacted, this proposal will provide comprehensive long-term care protection to seniors and to disabled Americans of all ages. It will be among my highest legislative priorities for the 102nd Congress.

Thank you for taking the time to contact me and for sharing your views on issues affecting our senior citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P.D. Kennedy", written in a cursive style.

Edward M. Kennedy

EMK/rj

CONSENT COMMUNICATION # 2 *S-1154*
Comm. from Senator Edward M. Kennedy
regarding the resolution adopted by
the City Council relative to problems
in the Medicare system and the cuts in
benefits for the elderly and disabled.

In City Council,
October 28, 1991

Placed on file