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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

PROPOSED REMARKS by the PRESIDENT

before the

TEXAS NURSING HOME ASSOCIATION

It is a pleasure to meet so many owners and administrators of licensed nursing homes in Texas. You and your profession are to be commended on your efforts to provide quality health care for so many older Texans. I share with you that concern and interest for the health and welfare of all of our nation's older Americans. Let me just briefly reaffirm to you what I said in my recent message to Congress, "As President, I intend to do everything in my power to help our nation demonstrate by its deeds a deep concern for the dignity and worth of older Americans."

I have also asked Congress for a full cost-of-living increase in Social Security and Supplementary Security income benefits to begin immediately. This increase, which amounts to 6.4% would become effective with the July payments to help maintain the purchasing power of more than 32 million Americans. Another measure of interest to you which I am advocating vigorously is the protection of older Americans against catastrophic illness. Under our proposal, everyone covered by Medicare would be entitled, among other things, to unlimited stays in nursing homes and hospitals.

I am also aware that the cost-related reimbursement provision of the 1972 Social Security Amendments is of great concern to you at this time, particularly as outlined in HEW's recently proposed regulation.

There appears to be the need for further work on the regulations. Several provisions seem to be an overzealous interference in your business. I am particularly concerned about the amount of increased paperwork that it will cause you. This is especially true for your profession. We need to have our nurses taking care of patients - not government paperwork! I recently directed each Department, including HEW, to reduce the paperwork requirements by 10% by July 1, 1976. I am concerned, therefore, about the possible impact which these regulations will have on you and how it fits into my request to HEW to reduce the paperwork.

I am also greatly concerned, as I know you are, about the rising costs of health care. The Council on Wage and Price Stability issued a report only two days ago documenting this alarming inflation. One of the chief causes cited by the Council report is the lack of incentives in Medicare and Medicaid for hospitals and other health providers to hold down costs through efficient management. I want to make sure that HEW's proposed regulations provide those incentives so the private sector can give older Americans the best possible health care for the lowest possible cost - and with the least Federal involvement in day-to-day management.