

dramas "Listen to the People" and "They Burned the Books" as well as the so-called propaganda history "America." In this book, which was printed in many languages and distributed in thousands of copies around the world, he told his country's story with all the honesty and truthfulness that was his nature.

But Benet did not live to see the publication of "America." He died March 13, 1948, the victim of a sudden heart attack at just 44 years of age. Found among his papers at his death were the following four lines, which were perhaps the last he ever wrote:

Now for my country, that it still may live,
All that I am, all that I have I'll give.
It is not much beside the gift of the brave,
But yet accept it, since 'tis all I have.

I'd like to close by reading part of a prayer Stephen Vincent Benet wrote for President Franklin D. Roosevelt, known as the President's Prayer. Surely its sentiments are those which every man and woman of good will can still share today.

Our Earth is but a small star in a great universe. Yet of it we can make, if we choose, a planet unvexed by war, untroubled by hunger or fear, undivided by senseless distinctions of race, color, or theory. Grant us brotherhood, not only for this day but for all our years—a brotherhood not of words but of acts and deeds. We are all of us children of earth—grant us that simple knowledge. If our brothers are oppressed, then we are oppressed. If they hunger, we hunger. If their freedom is taken away, our freedom is not secure. Grant us a common faith that man shall know bread and peace—that he shall know justice and righteousness, freedom and security, an equal opportunity and an equal chance to do his best, not only in our own lands but throughout the world. And in that faith, let us march toward the clean world our hands can make.

PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS ACT
OF 1998

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the Democratic Caucus' proposal to protect consumers in managed care, the Patients' Bill of Rights Act of 1998.

Ten years ago, only one in seven of us would have been enrolled in managed care. Today, after huge and wrenching changes in our health care system, more than three in four Americans is now in managed care.

No matter how prosperous or healthy our lives, all of us at some point become patients and find ourselves at the tender mercies of our health care system.

When that happens, we are entitled to minimal rights and measures that will protect our health and dignity.

That's what the legislation we're introducing today is all about.

We have all heard the horror stories. Heart attack victims forced to drive miles to an approved emergency room. A woman vacationing in Hawaii forced to fly to her plan's participating Emergency Room in Chicago to get care for an emergency situation. Cardiac center's selected on the basis of price, not quality. Denials of treatment resulting in worse problems. A woman testified before our committee

late last year about a boy who lost his leg to cancer because the managed care organization would not approve the necessary treatment in time to stop its progression.

The legislation we propose is straightforward. It's the product of exhaustive and exhausting discussions involving the full range of views and opinions within the Democratic Party—perhaps the most diverse and contentious political organization ever assembled under one umbrella.

First, our legislation says that you should get the care you need when you are sick. If you need to see a specialist, you can see one. If you have an emergency, you can go to the nearest emergency room for treatment. You'll be able to become part of a clinical trial if there is no other treatment available, and you'll be able to get non-formulary drugs if there is cause for exceptions.

Second, you'll be able to get the information you need about your plan. You'll know what is covered, what is not, how and where to get care, who to talk to in order to get a complaint or grievance resolved, what providers are in the plan and how the plan measures up in term of providing quality care to members.

Third, if you've got a problem with your care, you'll know where and how to straighten it out. If your plan denies a treatment and you're harmed, you'll be able to hold the plan responsible.

Finally, our legislation requires plans to have a program to look at the quality of care they provide to the people they serve.

Ours is real, enforceable legislation. It doesn't give health care providers a right to bill. It gives patients a bill of rights.

We've worked with a range of organizations on this legislation. I'm proud to welcome representatives of both the American Medical Association and the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations in support of our efforts. That these two institutions are represented in support of our bill should tell you that this is a well-thought-out piece of legislation.

We don't believe that managed care is inherently evil. Managed care has controlled costs, and improved care for its patients in many instances. But the excesses that spawned managed care have in turn produced their own excesses.

The Patients' Bill of Rights Act is supported by the following groups and organizations. American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) [March 31, 1998 Letter]; American Cancer Society [March 13, 1998 Letter]; American College of Emergency Physicians [March 31, 1998 News Release]; American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations [March 31, 1998 News Release]; American Medical Association [March 31, 1998 Statement]; American Psychological Association [March 12, 1998 Letter]; Consumers Union [March 31, 1998 Letter]; Families USA Foundation [March 31, 1998 Letter]; HIP Health Plans [March 31, 1998 Letter]; Kaiser Permanente [March 31, 1998 Letter]; National Alliance for the Mentally Ill [March 31, 1998 Statement]; National Association of Children's Hospitals [March 31, 1998 News Release]; and National Mental Health Association [March 13, 1998 Letter].

As the baseball season begins across the country, I hope that my Republican colleagues—many of whom have joined in co-sponsoring similar legislation—will join in

working with me and my fellow Democrats so that we can put a bill on the President's desk by the time that the baseball season draws to a close this September.

AIR FORCE RESERVE BIRTHDAY
TRIBUTE

HON. JIM GIBBONS

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the birthday of the United States Air Force Reserve. April 14, 1998 will mark fifty years of service by the Air Force Reserve to the United States of America. The Air Force Reserve traces its heritage to the National Defense Act of 1916, which authorized a corps of reserve officer and enlisted aviators. From this modest beginning, Reservists made noteworthy contributions during both world wars. On April 14, 1948, the Air Force Reserve became a component of the United States Air Force. In 1998, the Air Force Reserve celebrates the 50th anniversary of this event. During those 50 years, Reservists have served proudly and with great distinction during times of conflict.

They answered the call in Korea in the 1950s, in Berlin, Cuba, Korea and Southeast Asia in the 1960s, and in the Persian Gulf in the 1990s. In peacetime, while maintaining a high degree of readiness to respond during a crisis, Reservists perform humanitarian, rescue, hurricane reconnaissance and aerial-spray missions throughout the United States and around the world. They also support virtually every air force peacetime operational activity, from airlift missions and satellite operations, to patrolling the no-fly zones over Bosnia and Iraq.

The Air Force Reserve has grown from an "extremes force" to an integrated combat ready fighting force. As the Air Force Reserve moves into the 21st Century, they play an expanded role in meeting the fast changing needs of our country. They are developing more detailed long-range and annual planning documents to ensure the Reserve is a viable partner in the total force goal—to best use our capabilities, provide America an effective defense, and give the best value for our defense dollar. Originally intended for wartime augmentation, today these citizen airmen support national objectives on a daily basis.

Their day-to-day involvement has increased markedly in recent years. The Air Force Reserve participated in 11 contingencies between 1953 and 1990. In the last seven years, they have played a significant role in over 40 major operations. This is part of life and they are proud to do it. In every instance since Desert Storm, they have met these obligations with all volunteers.

The Air Force Reserve is a force of dedicated airmen who help support the world's most respected Air Force. Today, they provide 13 percent of total Air Force manning and roughly 20 percent of the Air Force's total air and space capability. Their mission is readiness, but their job is to support the total Air Force. Air Force planners and leaders recognize the need for their support and rely on them to step in wherever needed.