

COMMENDATION OF BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF NORTH CAROLINA

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 20, 1998

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina for becoming the first company in the state, and one of the first in the nation, to pledge its voluntary compliance with the Consumer Bill of Rights and Responsibilities developed by the President's Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in the Health Care Industry.

The Consumer Bill of Rights sets forth eight recommendations to promote quality and protect consumers in the health care system. The recommendations call for health plans to guarantee consumers' access to clear information about their health plan, allow sufficient choice of physicians and hospitals, provide access to emergency services and to grievance and appeals processes, ensure confidentiality of health information, and encourage participation by the consumer in treatment decisions. The Consumer Bill of Rights also calls for an environment of mutual respect between consumers and the health care industry and recognizes that consumers should take reasonable responsibility for their health care.

Congress tried to pass legislation this year which contained many of these same patient protections. Our citizens deserve these assurances in the changing health care marketplace, and I was disappointed that we could not resolve our differences on this issue. However, it is very heartening to see that Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina is taking the initiative to adopt fundamental rights and guarantees for its health care consumers. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina is the largest health insurer in the state, with 1.6 million members, and the company's decision to provide these basic patient protections to its members follows its long-standing commitment to quality care. I hope other health plans in North Carolina and across the country will follow Blue Cross and Blue Shield's notable example and endorse the Consumer Bill of Rights.

During the 105th Congress, much has been said about changes that are occurring in health care and about how patients and the doctor-patient relationship can be protected in this sometimes unsettling environment. Government has an important role in this, I believe, but it is even more important for insurers themselves to assume responsibility for the quality of their product and for the access of their customers to the quality care they need. That is what Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina has done in endorsing the Consumer Bill of Rights. We should recognize and honor this kind of corporate responsibility when we witness it, and I am pleased to do so today.

NOMINATING DANTE B. FASCELL FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 20, 1998

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, last week more than 100 Members of Congress signed their names to a letter nominating Hon. Dante B. Fascell for the Presidential Medal of Freedom. It is a measure of respect for Dante that those names include prominent Republicans as well as Democrats, and Members who know him only by reputation as well as many close friends.

I submit the text of the letter and the accompanying signatures to be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, October 14, 1998.

Mr. PHILLIP M. CAPLAN,
*Assistant to the President and Staff Secretary,
The White House Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CAPLAN: We write to nominate Dante B. Fascell to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom. As Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Dante B. Fascell exercised strong, principled leadership for our country during the final chapter of the Cold War. He has the respect of Democrats and Republicans and should be properly honored for his service to America. We believe that the Presidential Medal of Freedom would be the most appropriate honor.

Dante B. Fascell, born in Bridgehampton, New York, March 9, 1917, moved to Florida in 1925 where he completed his education and was admitted to the bar in 1938. Dante Fascell entered the Florida National Guard on January 6, 1941. Commissioned a Second Lieutenant May 23, 1942, he served in the African, Sicilian, and Italian campaigns of World War II. Dante Fascell served as a member of the Florida state house of representatives from 1950-1954. Subsequently, he served in the House of Representatives from January 3, 1955 to January 3, 1989. Congressman Fascell served as Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs from the Nineteenth through the One Hundredth Congresses.

During his tenure on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Dante Fascell was instrumental in enacting an astonishing array of bills that significantly advanced America's interest abroad. These included the creation of the National Endowment for Democracy, Radio Marti, the Inter-American Foundation, and the North-South Center. Congressman Fascell also authored and advanced numerous bills to improve international narcotics control and aviation safety, as well securing passage of the Freedom Support and SEED Acts, the Fascell Fellowships, and biennial State Department Authorization bills. Dante Fascell was also a driving force behind establishing the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

We respectfully request you submit this nomination to the President to award Dante B. Fascell the Presidential Medal of Freedom, pursuant to Executive Order 11085, in recognition of Chairman Fascell's exceptionally meritorious contributions to the na-

tional security interests of the United States.

Sincerely,
BENJAMIN A. GILMAN,
*Chairman,
Committee on International Relations.*
JESSE HELMS,
*Chairman,
Committee on Foreign Relations.*
RICHARD G. LUGAR,
United States Senator.
CHRISTOPHER J. DODD,
United States Senator.
LEE H. HAMILTON,
*Ranking Democratic Member,
Committee on International Relations.*
CONNIE MACK,
United States Senator.
BOB GRAHAM,
United States Senator.

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| Sam Gejdenson (D-CT) | Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO) |
| David Bonior (D-MI) | John Conyers (D-MI) |
| Steny Hoyer (D-MD) | Elliot Engel (D-NY) |
| Jim Oberstar (D-MN) | Peter King (R-NY) |
| Dick Gephardt (D-MO) | Howard Berman (D-CA) |
| Gene Taylor (D-MS) | Barney Frank (D-MA) |
| Dan Miller (R-FL) | Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) |
| Hal Rogers (R-KY) | Nita Lowey (D-NY) |
| Martin Sabo (D-MN) | Denis Kucinich (D-OH) |
| Donald Payne (D-NJ) | Billy Tauzin (R-LA) |
| Tome Lantos (D-CA) | Don Young (R-AL) |
| Robert Mendendez (D-NJ) | Bob Livingston (R-LA) |
| John Olver (D-MA) | Rick White (R-WA) |
| Tom Barrett (D-WI) | Alcee Hastings (D-FL) |
| Henry Hyde (R-IL) | John Dingell (D-MI) |
| David Dreir (R-CA) | Louise Slaughter (D-NY) |
| Owen Pickett (D-VA) | Sherrod Brown (D-OH) |
| Dave Obey (D-WI) | Carrie Meek (D-FL) |
| Porter Goss (R-FL) | Martin Frost (D-TX) |
| John Mica (R-FL) | Charlie Rangel (D-NY) |
| Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-FL) | Frank Mascara (D-PA) |
| Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) | Jim Moran (D-VA) |
| Robert Wexler (R-FL) | Jack Murtha (D-PA) |
| Jim Davis (D-FL) | Bob Weygand (D-RI) |
| Jim Leach (R-IA) | Anna Eshoo (D-CA) |
| Gerry Solomon (R-NY) | Tom DeLay (R-TX) |
| Clay Shaw (R-FL) | Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) |
| John Fox (R-PA) | Joe Moakley (D-MA) |
| Chris Smith (R-NJ) | Nick Rahall (D-WV) |
| Dan Burton (R-IN) | Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) |
| Matthew Martinez (D-CA) | Patrick J. Kennedy (D-RI) |
| Doug Bereuter (R-NE) | Tom Allen (D-ME) |
| Ben Cardin (D-MD) | Adam Smith (D-WA) |
| Jim Barcia (D-MI) | Henry Waxman (D-CA) |
| Bob Clement (D-TN) | Bob Borski (D-PA) |
| Solomon Ortiz (D-TX) | Robert Matsui (D-CA) |
| T.J. Manton (D-NY) | Gary Condit (D-CA) |
| Ellen Tauscher (D-CA) | Norm Sisisky (D-VA) |
| Gene Green (D-TX) | Sanford Bishop, Jr. (D-GA) |
| Neil Abercrombie (D-HI) | Corrine Brown (D-FL) |
| Peter DeFazio (D-OR) | Eva Clayton (D-NC) |
| Elizabeth Furse (D-OR) | Lois Capps (D-CA) |
| Jose Serrano (D-NY) | Norm Dicks (D-WA) |
| Mike McNulty (D-NY) | Ed Markey (D-MA) |
| Karen McCarthy (D-MO) | Allen Boyd (D-FL) |
| Lynn Rivers (D-MI) | Collin Peterson (D-MN) |
| Bill Luther (D-MN) | Martin Meehan (D-MA) |
| Jack Quinn (R-NY) | |
| Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) | |
| Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) | |