

WHY 7 MEMBERS?

A further issue of authority and ease of decisionmaking is raised by the seven-member composition of the proposed Medicare Board. The current trend is to establish boards of three to five members, because larger boards often experience great difficulty in reaching a decision. Most recently, the former Interstate Commerce Commission, which initially consisted of 11 members, and was later reduced to five members, was abolished and many of its functions were transferred to a three-member Surface Transportation Board.

WHAT PRESIDENT?

The amount of independence granted the Medicare Board from the President and from congressional oversight is highly unusual and serves to limit the accountability of the board members . . .

Presidential authority over one of the largest government programs would . . . be severely limited, because the Chief Executive would have virtually no authority over board activities . . . Congressional influence and direction would also be limited because the board, able to raise its own operating funds, would not be subject to the yearly appropriations process.

TALK ABOUT MAKING HCFA MORE UNRESPONSIVE!

It is rare for such agencies to be authorized to generate their operating funds. Only a handful of such agencies, nearly all involved with banking and financial matters, have such authority.

IN CONCLUSION, LET'S BE ANTI-DEMOCRACY

Congress Sometimes departs from traditional guidelines regarding what is considered the type of organizational and administrative structure most likely to result in the effective delivery of government programs. The proposed bill restructuring the Medicare program, departing as it does from those guidelines, raises questions because it would divide program responsibility and authority between two government entities, an independent Medicare Board and the Division of HCFA-Sponsored Plans. Difficulties in administering the program are more likely to arise and produce conflicts more difficult to resolve when a program is divided between two distinct federal entities than when located within one entity. Additionally, there may be a problem when one of the entities is located within a department and the head of the department has little if any supervisory authority over that entity. That situation may serve to separate the department head from any problems that the entity may be experiencing and make it less likely that he or she would be willing or able to help resolve those problems. Finally, the amount of independence proposed for the Medicare Board would make it more difficult for the President to exercise guidance and direction over the Medicare program, and for Congress to provide guidance and direction to the board through its use of the appropriations process.

TRIBUTE TO DENMARK'S AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES, K. ERIK TYGENSEN

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 22, 2000

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in bidding farewell to Am-

bassador K. Erik Tygesen, who has served as Denmark's extraordinary envoy to the United States for the past five years. Ambassador Tygesen's outstanding efforts to promote the diplomatic relations between the United States and Denmark are a reflection of his exemplary devotion to democratic ideals, and we are immensely grateful for his commitment and integrity. He will be missed here in Washington.

In July 1997 President Clinton traveled to Denmark, the first-ever visit of a United States President in office. The trip was an overwhelming success, due in large part to the preparations and planning of Ambassador Tygesen. This visit further strengthened the long and strong lasting ties between our two countries. In his speech to Her Majesty the Queen of Denmark, President Clinton said, "The United States has had relations with Denmark longer than with any other country, and our nations have never been closer than today. On almost every issue we stand together, and on some of the most important issues we stand together almost alone. But America always knows it is in the right if Denmark is by our side."

Ambassador Tygesen embodies these sentiments that President Clinton voiced. Consistent with a long Danish tradition of championing peace, Ambassador Tygesen was a platoon leader in the first United Nations peacekeeping force, UNEF, in Gaza from 1956 to 1957. He subsequently devoted his life to the diplomatic service. After holding numerous high-level positions in the Danish cabinet, Ambassador Tygesen was appointed Deputy Head of the Danish delegation to the United Nations' 11th Special Assembly on Economic Affairs in 1980, where his performance was so commendable that he shortly thereafter was appointed Ambassador to Brazil and then to Germany. In 1995 he was made Ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark to the United States of America.

In this last post, Ambassador Tygesen encouraged Denmark to join the United States as an active part of the international effort to counter the destabilizing effects of President Milosevic's ethnic cleansing agenda in the former Yugoslavia. Consequently, Denmark was the one of the largest per capita contributors to peacekeeping missions in Kosova, participating in the air campaign and providing troops and police as well as humanitarian aid and reconstruction assistance.

Ambassador Tygesen also promoted Danish support of NATO expansion. At the Washington Summit in April 1999, Denmark welcomed Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to NATO. This generosity of spirit and global awareness were also evident as Ambassador Tygesen sought, both in Washington and in Copenhagen, to support further liberalization of transatlantic trade in the interest of both our countries. His efforts to contain and eliminate trade frictions and to devise an early-warning system so that both sides of the Atlantic might avoid such trade disputes in the future have strengthened cooperation between the United States and the European Union.

Last year the Ambassador also secured Danish funds which made it possible to sign an agreement between the Danish Ministry of Culture and the government of the United States Virgin Islands (the former Danish West Indies). Denmark shares a rich common heritage with these islands, and through this agreement will transfer original archival mate-

rial on the history of the Danish West Indies from the Danish National Archives in Copenhagen to the United States Virgin Islands.

Ambassador Tygesen has been integral to promoting the continued good relations between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Denmark. He displays all the noble qualities of compassion, reasonableness and foresight which characterize his countrymen, and we in Washington shall miss him greatly.

HONORING CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY'S MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 22, 2000

Mr. LARSON. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Congressman SAM GEJDENSON (CT-02) and myself, today I honor a special group of college athletes who have captured the hearts and minds of people across the State. On March 16, the Central Connecticut State University Men's Basketball team played in the NCAA Division I tournament for the first time since joining the division in 1986.

When the Blue Devils traveled to the Minneapolis Metrodome for their big game, they brought with them the accomplishment of a 25 and 5 overall record during the 1999-2000 season, including a 15-game winning streak, and the title of Northeast Conference Champions. They had set their sights on a win in the first round of action, but they were already winners in the hearts of many across the Nation.

Central waited many years, but it was finally their turn at the "big dance." As an alumnus of the University, I could not be happier for the team.

There is nothing better than school pride. The approximately 12,000 students who attend the University, which is located on a campus that encompasses both Newington and New Britain Connecticut, were given two more reasons to feel this pride with the team's win at the Northeast Conference on March 6, and with the announcement on Sunday, March 12 that they were headed to the NCAA Division I Championship playoffs.

The great, former Central coach Bill Detrick summed up the passion and pride that alumnus, students and friends of the University felt when the team won the Northeast Conference Championship, "When those nets were cut down, oh boy, all the players, coaches and fans ever at Central were up on that ladder, too."

Yes, in a manner of speaking, we were on that ladder. And the person who helped us experience that amazing moment was the Blue Devil's coach and fellow University alumnus, Howie Dickenman. Under his leadership the team won the Northeast Conference Championship just two years after joining the conference. In just his fourth year as head coach, Dickenman has transformed the Blue Devils from a 4 and 22 team into champions. No one is more deserving of the Northeast Conference Coach of the Year recognition than Howie Dickenman.

Here is a man who just earned a remarkable professional achievement, but who gave