



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

Practice Directorate

March 12, 1998

Honorable John D. Dingell
Ranking Minority Member
House Commerce Committee
564 Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Dingell:

On behalf of the American Psychological Association, I am writing to express our strong support for the "Patient Bill of Rights Act of 1998" that you have drafted along with other members of the Democratic Leadership.

This proposal would provide essential and comprehensive protections to consumers in the private health care marketplace, in response to extremely pressing concerns. We are particularly pleased that the bill includes provisions on health plan accountability, point-of-service offering and provider nondiscrimination. These are psychology's top priorities in our efforts to pass federally enforceable standards in health care. In addition, the bill assures timely and independent appeals of denials of care, reforms the utilization review process to require the use of trained personnel and guarantees access to specialty care and emergency services.

We deeply appreciate your continued leadership on these issues and look forward to working with you toward enactment of essential consumer protections this year.

Sincerely,

Marilyn S. Richmond
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for Government Relations

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