



Civil Rights and Human Dignity

98 APR 31 PM 1:14

April 30, 1998

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Robert A. Barr, Chair
Yale Law School

Eileen A. Baselon, MD
Department of Psychiatry,
Medical College of Pennsylvania

Barbara Cutler
Medline, Inc., New York NY

Mary Jane Englund, MD
Washington Business Group
on Health

Kenneth R. Fennberg
Assembly, Washington DC

Howard H. Goldstein, MD
Department of Psychiatry,
University of Maryland
School of Medicine

Nicki Heideppert
Personnel of Heideppert, Inc.
Washington DC

Brent L. Henry
Mediatric Health Care Group,
Washington DC

Emily Hoffman
New York NY

C. Lynne Jones
Legal Aid Society of Cleveland

Miriam Kravitz
Executive Director, INCase, Inc.
New York NY

Martha L. Minow
Harvard Law School

Stephen J. Morse
University of Pennsylvania
Law School

Carole Perez
Ahead-Action Mental Health
Self-Help Network
in South Texas

Lynette C. Segalyn
Segalyn Associates,
Washington DC

H. Rutherford Turnbull, III
Beech Center for Families and
Disability, University of Kansas

HONORARY TRUSTEE

Miriam Baselon Knox
Washington DC

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Robert Burstein, Ph.D.

Senator Tom Daschle
SH-509 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510-4103

Dear Sen. Daschle:

I am writing on behalf of the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law to express our support of S. 1890, the "Patients' Bill of Rights Act," and to commend you for your leadership in this important area.

The Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law is the leading national legal-advocacy organization representing people with mental disabilities. Through precedent-setting litigation, in the public-policy arena and by assisting legal advocates across the country, the center works to define and uphold the rights of adults and children who rely on public services and ensure them equal access to health and mental health care, education, housing and employment.

S. 1890 is an important bill because it includes many rights that patients need to be guaranteed when they engage the health care system. Several of these rights are particularly vital to individuals with mental disabilities. We are pleased to see provisions for access to specialists, ombudsmen and needed prescription drugs, as well as guarantees of continuity of care and nondiscrimination in the delivery of health services. While we hope to continue working with you and your staff to deal in more depth with some consumer protection issues, we are pleased to endorse S. 1890 at this time.

The Bazelon Center appreciates your diligent work in managed care legislation and thanks you for providing the "Patients' Bill of Rights Act" as a means to ensure that all patients will have the basic health care rights that they need and deserve.

Sincerely,


Chris Koyanagi
Director of Legislative Policy

