



April 30, 1998

The Honorable Edward Kennedy
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kennedy:

On behalf of SEIU's more than 1.2 million members, I want to thank you for taking the lead to promote quality health care for working families. The common sense protections proposed in the Patient's Bill of Rights (S. 1890 / H.R. 3605) will ensure that working families no longer see their health jeopardized by plans that deny necessary care, restrict access to specialists or withhold information.

SEIU is the largest health care union in the country. We represent more than 600,000 health care workers in all sectors of the health care industry. Our workers see first hand the short cuts and abuses that occur in our health care system today. In a recent SEIU survey of health care workers, 45% said patient care has gotten worse in the past few years. We strongly support provisions in the Patient's Bill of Rights to protect workers who speak out on patient's behalf, recognizing that workers act as advocates for quality care.

I am very pleased that you have adopted many of the recommendations of the President's Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in the Health Care Industry. SEIU's Secretary Treasurer, Betty Bednarczyk was a member of this commission, and we are pleased that the issues deliberated for nine months were addressed in the multi-faceted legislation you have introduced.

Once again, thank you for sponsoring this important piece of legislation. We look forward to working with your office to promote health care quality.

Sincerely,

Andrew L. Stern
International President

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