

5-19-1905

## Correspondence, John C. Stennis, November 1-10, 1966

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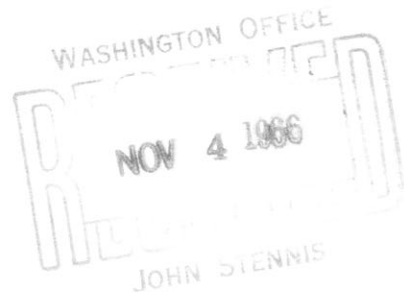
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FIRST FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION

FIRST FEDERAL BUILDING  
HATTIESBURG, MISSISSIPPI

November 1, 1966

TRAVIS H. BOYKIN  
SECRETARY-TREASURER



Senator John C. Stennis  
of Mississippi  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Stennis:

I will appreciate it if you will send me some information in regards to Medicare Hospitalization in Hattiesburg.

For your information, neither of the hospitals here have qualified for Medicare and, as I understand it, for the reason that they would not sign an agreement to arbitrarily place patients in a joint room with other people regardless of color. I understand, too, that this requirement is not in the Civil Rights Law but is an arbitrary ruling of those who administer the law.

I read recently with a great deal of interest that you introduced a rider on other legislation before the Senate requiring that no hospital patients would be arbitrarily assigned to double rooms if, in the opinion of the doctors or hospital administrators, it would not be in the interest of the patient so to do. I later read in the paper that while this rider you introduced was voted favorably by a large majority of the Senate it was not accepted by the House, but instead representatives of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare gave you and other senators definite assurance that this arbitrary ruling of assignment of hospital patients would not be enforced, but would be left to the discretion of the doctors and hospital administrator.

I have checked with the administrator of the Forrest County General Hospital here, also with officials at the Social Security office, and they state that no information or instructions have been received so far from the H.E.W. in regards to this ruling. In the meantime a good many people

Senator John C. Stennis  
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eligible for Medicare Hospitalization are being denied this service and I would appreciate you looking into this.

In this connection, too, I think H.E.W. should make this ruling retroactive to July 1st, the date Medicare became effective, for the reason that if the ruling is in effect now it should have been in effect all the time, and in such cases I think Medicare should pay for all hospitalization effective July 1, 1966.

One other thing, and this is important, I was informed by the administrator of Forrest County General Hospital, also by some of the trustees of the hospital, that this institution has been intergrated and qualified in every respect for Medicate patients with the one exception of the arbitrary assignment of patients in double rooms and this particularly strengthens my position that certainly in such cases those who have hospitalization beginning with July 1st should be reimbursed from that date under Medicare.

This is a rather lengthy letter, but I felt it was necessary to explain this to you in full.

Please be assured that we highly appreciate the very fine service you are rendering our people in the U. S. Senate and your many friends here join me in sending you our very best wishes.

Sincerely,



32 Hospital Guidelines

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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

WILLIAM H. DARDEN, CHIEF OF STAFF  
CHARLES B. KIRBOW, CHIEF CLERK

DeKalb, Mississippi  
November 10, 1966

[REDACTED]  
Hattiesburg, Mississippi

Dear [REDACTED]:

Thank you very much for your recent letter regarding the unavailability of Medicare treatment at the hospitals in the Hattiesburg. Your generous remarks regarding my efforts to make it possible for our hospitals to participate in the Medicare program are deeply appreciated and most encouraging to me.

I share your concern over the fact that innocent people are being denied medical care because of the unreasonable attitude of federal administrators. This problem has absorbed much of my attention in the past session and I think some progress has been made as a result of the written assurances I obtained from the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. I recently sent to every hospital in Mississippi a copy of these assurances together with an explanation of their effect. I am enclosing a copy of these documents for your personal information.

I understand that the Forest County General Hospital is presently negotiating with the Department of Health, Education and Welfare for approval under the Medicare program. Now that the most unreasonable demand of the Department has been somewhat softened by the assurances given by the Secretary, I am hopeful that Medicare will soon be available to the people of the Hattiesburg area.

Sincerely yours,

John Stennis  
United States Senator

JS/mp  
Enclosures