

And I might say that up to this point it looks OK. And I compliment you for the final word on it. And I do hope that the Congress will put a stamp of immediacy on this proposal, because I think it is very urgently needed.

Mr. COHEN. Thank you.

I would just like to say, Mr. Gonzalez, that although there is a great deal of controversy, not only in your family, perhaps, on medicare, but in the whole United States. But I am very happy to report that today, which marks 7 months since the medicare law was enacted, we have received the most wholehearted support and cooperation from the overwhelming bulk of the physicians of the country in the administration of medicare. And I feel that we are going to get 99⁴/₁₀₀-percent cooperation with the physicians in making this law work when it goes into effect on July 1. So there have been a lot of changes occurring and I believe they have been very constructive.

Mr. BARRETT. Thank you, Mr. Gonzalez.

Mrs. Sullivan?

Mrs. SULLIVAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to apologize to you, Mr. Cohen, for not being here when you made your presentation. But there was a bit of excitement down in your agency and I stopped by the Secretary's Office at his invitation.

Mr. COHEN. I am sorry I could not be there, Congresswoman Sullivan.

Mrs. SULLIVAN. It was fun and interesting. I understand the Secretary invited us to meet the regional directors from all over the country and also invited President Johnson, who seemed to enjoy the occasion, also.

Mr. COHEN. Yes. I am glad you could come.

Mrs. SULLIVAN. I did not get to read your whole message, Mr. Cohen. But I would like to ask you this one question.

The ultimate test of legislation of this kind in my estimation is the benefit to the American consumer. Is there any way that you could measure or describe the benefit to the user of medical services in terms of economy and convenience or better service of the kind of facility which would be built if we enact H.R. 9256?

Mr. COHEN. Yes, I think I can.

Let me say this. I think the various studies show that a group of people, physicians or dentists, working together with aids and equipment can render a more efficient and a higher number of any given services to the consumer for the same price. I think it stands to reason that if you can bring physicians together in a group, so that they are not using all this time, let's say, driving this car around, which is not exactly the highest use of a physician's training and experience, but have them together in a group where people can come, and they can use these services, you are going to get more hours of professional service per week from the physician.

Secondly, you can use more subprofessional personnel. I recall when I was a boy and went to the dentist, the dentist cleaned my teeth. But today we have a practice where you have a situation where dentists may have a number of chairs and dental assistants, and he supervises the cleaning of teeth, and he will undertake the more advanced work that requires his professional training.

Now, anything that brings people together in a group where they are working congenially and effectively is going to give the consumer