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Hector P. Garcia, M.D.
1315 Bright
Corpus Christi, Texas 78405

Dear Hector,

As you know, the Executive Committee of Memorial Medical Center voted to support the TMA proposed amendment to the bill recently submitted (S.B. 44 in the Senate and H.B. 159 in the House of Representatives). I have met with the TAFP Executive Committee several times recently and have talked with U.T. Vice Chancellor Dr. Ed Brandt about the purposes of the bill and the underlying reasons and needs which have caused this and similar bills to be submitted during the past three sessions of the legislature.

The bill has been submitted in order to alleviate the financial plight of certain "primary teaching hospitals." These are hospitals closely affiliated with medical schools and they have large house staffs (residency training programs) and they participate in clinical instruction of medical students. These hospitals, incidentally, are also subjected to the imposition of out-of-county charity patients as is Memorial Medical Center.

The most noteworthy of these hospitals are Parkland in Dallas, John Peter Smith in Fort Worth, Bexar County Hospital system in San Antonio and Harris County Hospital System in Houston. Dr. Brandt notes there are 17 "primary teaching hospitals."

The TMA submitted its proposed amendment primarily in order to include certain hospitals in Austin and Corpus Christi, even though these are not "primary teaching hospitals." The Texas Academy of Family Physicians elected to not support the TMA proposal because it would broaden a bill which they thought should be further restricted rather than broadened and also because UT agreed to insert language into the bill which would protect present funding of Family Practice residency programs under P.L 282.

The Texas Hospital Association voted to support the bill (in spite of Mr. McCuistion's objections) but would not support the TMA amendment.

The bill will cost, if fully funded, $57,910,000 over the next biennium. The TMA amendment is said to add an additional $14,000,000. Such a costly bill even without the amendment is thought to have only a 40% chance of passage.

I believe we should continue to push for adoption of the TMA amendment if the bill is to be passed. While this may tend to kill passage, it will underscore the need of hospitals such as Memorial Medical Center to obtain some sort of state relief not only for the training programs, but for the cost of out-of-county charity patients.

If I can provide any further information, please do not hesitate to call.

Thank you for your efforts on our behalf.

Sincerely,

E. L. Holt, M.D.
Director, Family Practice Residency Program

ELH/df