



**CMS 2010 Tri-Regional Plan Compliance Conference**  
*Dallas Hilton Lincoln Center, May 19-20, 2010*

**A MOSAIC of More: More insight, More answers, More compliance...**

Verbatim Transcript

Marjorie McColl Petty, Regional Director, Department of Health & Human Services, Dallas Region VI

>> BEGINNING THIS MORNING'S SESSION, WE ARE VERY FORTUNATE

TO HAVE AS OUR FIRST SPEAKER MARJORIE MCCALL PETTY.

SHE IS THE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES REGIONAL DIRECTOR

IN THE DALLAS REGION, REGION 6.

PRIOR TO HER APPOINTMENT AS H.H.S. REGIONAL DIRECTOR

IN 2009, MARJORIE SERVED AS DIRECTOR AT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

AND CONSUMER PROTECTION FOR THE KANSAS CORPORATION COMMISSION

FOR 6 YEARS.

SHE ALSO SERVED AS CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT THE DELTA

DENTISTS OF KANSAS, BEGINNING IN AUGUST 2008 AFTER SERVING

ON THE COMPANY'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS SINCE 2001.



FROM 2006 TO 2008, SHE  
WAS PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

OF DIRECTORS OF DELTA DENTAL  
FOUNDATION, WHERE SHE REVIEWED

AND GRANTED 2.9 MILLION FOR ORAL  
HEALTH PROJECTS FOR KANSANS.

PREVIOUSLY, SHE SERVED AS A  
SUBCONTRACTOR FOR 2 REGIONAL

OFFICES OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AS

A PUBLIC POLICY MANAGER.

MS.ETTY HAS ALSO SERVED AS  
A STATE SENATOR IN KANSAS

AND A MEMBER OF THE  
TOPEKA CITY COUNCIL.

SHE RECEIVED A J.D. FROM  
WASHBURN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL

OF LAW AND A MASTER'S IN  
EDUCATION AND COUNSELING FROM

THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS.

I PERSONALLY HAVE ENJOYED  
GETTING TO KNOW MARJORIE AS SHE

HAS BEGUN HER TENURE HERE AS  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR, AND I THINK

YOU WILL THOROUGHLY ENJOY  
MEETING HER AND LISTENING TO

HER WORDS.

MARJORIE.

[APPLAUSE]

>> THANK YOU, JULIE.

IT'S GREAT TO BE HERE  
WITH YOU TODAY.

THE LAST TIME I WAS WITH A GROUP  
THAT INCLUDED PEOPLE FROM TEXAS

AND KANSAS AND MISSOURI AND  
GEORGIA, I WAS WITH A GROUP

OF FRIENDS FROM DALLAS, AND  
WE TOOK A TRAIN FROM KANSAS

CITY TO ST.

LOUIS EARLY SATURDAY MORNING.

ANY OF YOU DONE THAT TRAIN RIDE?

IT WAS FOR ABOUT  
5 HOURS INTO ST.

LOUIS FOR A ST.

LOUIS CARDINALS AND ATLANTA  
BRAVES GAME, AND THE BRAVES WON

--THOSE OF YOU THAT  
ARE FROM GEORGIA.

BUT IT WAS A VERY FUN DAY,  
AND I'M HOPEFUL THAT TODAY WILL

BE A VERY FUN DAY  
FOR YOU ALL AS WELL.

I UNDERSTAND YESTERDAY  
WAS VERY SUCCESSFUL.

THERE NO GLITCHES, LOTS OF GREAT  
INFORMATION, SO I APPLAUD YOU

FOR BEING HERE TO BE  
PART OF THIS EVENT.

I WANT TO THANK FIRST JULIE  
KENNEDY, THE ASSOCIATE REGIONAL

DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF  
MEDICARE HEALTH PLAN OPERATIONS

FOR OUR REGIONAL OFFICE.

SHE DOES A WONDERFUL JOB AND I  
KNOW, AS WELL AS OTHER PEOPLE

HERE IN THE AUDIENCE, HAS BEEN  
AN AWARD WINNER AND ACKNOWLEDGED

FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT  
FOR HER ROLE AND THE GOOD WORK

THAT SHE DOES.

THANKS TO THE C.M.S. REGION 6  
STAFF FOR THEIR EXCELLENT WORK

IN HOSTING THIS MEETING.

I CONTINUE TO BE IN AWE OF  
THE COMMITMENT AND THE PASSION

OF THE STAFF IN THE REGIONAL  
OFFICE, SO THOSE OF YOU FROM MY

REGION, THANK YOU.

ALSO THANKS TO REGION 4 AND 7  
FOR THE HELP IN ORGANIZING

THE OUTSTANDING MEETING,  
AS I UNDERSTAND--AS I MENTIONED,

THERE'S NOT BEEN A GLITCH,  
SO --I KNOW HOW HARD THAT IS TO

PULL OFF, PARTICULARLY  
AUDIOVISUAL THINGS.

AND THANKS TO JIM KERR,  
ADMINISTRATOR, CONSORTIUM

FOR MEDICARE HEALTH PLAN  
OPERATIONS, FOR YOUR SUPPORT

FOR THE MEETING AND THE DALLAS  
REGIONAL OFFICE OPERATIONS.

IT'S REALLY TERRIFIC TO HAVE SO  
MANY EXPERTS FROM C.M.S. IN ONE

SPOT TODAY, AND THANKS TO ALL  
OF YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

IN THE MEETING THIS WEEK.

I THINK IT'S VERY EASY FOR  
PEOPLE TO MISS THE HARD WORK

THAT PUBLIC SERVANTS DO,  
BUT YOUR EXPERTISE

AND COLLABORATION IN THE  
ORCHESTRATION OF SERVICES

ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE WELL-BEING  
OF PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE--THE

DISABLED, THE ELDERLY.

MY MOM LIVED TILL SHE WAS 94 YEARS  
OLD, AND WE WERE--SHE

LIVED AND WAS CARED FOR BY OUR  
FAMILY UNTIL THAT TIME, AND THAT

WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY MANY OF  
THE SERVICES THAT WERE AVAILABLE

THROUGH THE MEDICARE PROGRAMS.

SHE WAS CARED FOR BY THE FAMILY.

WE WOULD ROTATE IN EVERY WEEKEND  
IN OKLAHOMA CITY AMONG ALL THE

SIBLINGS AND DID THAT FOR ABOUT  
8 YEARS WHILE SHE WAS CARED

FOR BY MY OLDER SISTER  
THERE IN OKLAHOMA CITY.

I REMEMBER ONE WEEKEND THAT  
I SPENT WITH HER.

IT WAS SEPTEMBER 9, AND SHE

SAID, UM, SHE, OF COURSE HAD

SAID, "WHY AM I STILL AROUND?"

AND I BECAME CONVINCED THAT SHE  
WAS STILL AROUND AT 94 TO TEACH

ME MORE COMPASSION AND PATIENCE.

AND SO HERE WE WERE, SEPTEMBER  
9, AND SHE JUST OPENED HER EYES

AND SHE SAID, "WHAT DAY IS  
TODAY?," AND I SAID, "SEPTEMBER

9," AND SHE SAID, "IT'S MY  
GRANDMOTHER'S BIRTHDAY."

AND I SAID, "REALLY?"

I SAID,  
"WELL, LET'S CELEBRATE HER

BIRTHDAY THEN."

AND SO WE MADE A BIRTHDAY CAKE,  
AND WE MADE A BIRTHDAY

CARD FOR HER,  
AND WE SANG HER "HAPPY

BIRTHDAY," AND, OF COURSE,  
HER GRANDMOTHER WOULD HAVE BEEN

156, BUT--[LAUGHS]

--THAT DIDN'T MAKE ANY  
DIFFERENCE TO MY MOTHER.

BUT THIS IS MY OPPORTUNITY TO  
THANK ALL OF YOU IN THIS REGION,

WHICH INCLUDES OKLAHOMA CITY,  
FOR THE CARE AND THE WORK THAT

YOU DO EVERY DAY THAT MADE  
THAT POSSIBLE FOR MY FAMILY.

SO THANK YOU.

I ALSO WANT TO TOUCH ON SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE AFFORDABLE

CARE ACT, SOME VERY IMPORTANT THINGS THAT YOU ALL HAVE THE

OPPORTUNITY TO CARRY FORWARD.

THE FIRST OF THOSE ASPECTS IS CERTAINLY THE PARTNERSHIPS THAT

WILL BE FORMED AND WILL BE EXPECTED AS THE RESULT

OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT.

MALCOLM FORBES, THE BUSINESSMAN, ONCE SAID, "THE BEST VISION

IS INSIGHT."

WELL, I TRUST THIS MEETING HAS PROVIDED YOU WITH THE DETAILS

AND THE INSIGHTS AND INFORMATION THAT YOU CAN USE AS WE FACE THE

REALLY DYNAMIC CHANGES THAT ARE GOING TO OCCUR IN HEALTH CARE

OVER THE COMING YEARS.

AS SECRETARY SIBELIUS'S REPRESENTATIVE IN THIS REGION,

I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU AND TO IMPLEMENTING

THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT, AND CERTAINLY COMMUNICATION

AND COLLABORATION WILL BE A KEY TO MAKING THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

MORE FULLY INFORMED ABOUT THEIR HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE AND TO

HELP THEM TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE  
OF THE BENEFITS AND THE CHOICES

THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO THEM.

A KEY AREA, OF COURSE, OF THE  
AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE ACT IS

THE PREVENTION PIECE.

WHEN I WAS INVITED TO SPEAK  
TODAY, I WAS REMINDED OF

AN E-MAIL THAT I'M SURE SOME OF  
YOU HAVE GOTTEN BEFORE OF ACTUAL

NOTATIONS ON PATIENTS' MEDICAL  
CHARTS, AND YOU MAY HAVE HEARD

SOME OF THESE AS WELL.

ONE OF THEM WAS, "THE  
PATIENT REFUSED AN AUTOPSY."

"THE PATIENT'S BEEN DEPRESSED  
EVER SINCE SHE STARTED SEEING

ME IN 1993."

"THE PATIENT HAS LEFT HIS  
WHITE BLOOD CELLS

IN ANOTHER HOSPITAL."

"THE PATIENT IS NUMB  
FROM THE TOES DOWN."

AND ONE OF MY FAVORITES,  
ACTUALLY, "DISCHARGE STATUS:

ALIVE WITHOUT MY PERMISSION."

NOW, WHAT WAS HE  
THINKING, OR SHE?

I CAN'T IMAGINE.

"THE PATIENT HAS 2 TEENAGE  
CHILDREN, BUT NO

OTHER ABNORMALITIES."

AND MY FAVORITE, OF COURSE,  
IS "THE PATIENT WAS TO HAVE HAD

BYPASS SURGERY.

HOWEVER, HE TOOK A JOB AS  
A STOCKBROKER INSTEAD."

THAT LAST PATIENT, WHO PASSED UP  
NEEDED SURGERY, SOUNDS ALL TOO

FAMILIAR TO MANY OF US  
THAT WORK IN THIS AREA.

WE KNOW THAT MANY INDIVIDUALS  
WHO HAVE NOT HAD HEALTH

INSURANCE MAY HAVE POSTPONED  
SOME VERY IMPORTANT MEDICAL

PROCEDURES OR AVOIDED PREVENTIVE  
HEALTH CARE DUE TO COSTS.

WE ALSO KNOW THAT PEOPLE WITH  
MEDICARE DO NOT ALWAYS TAKE

ADVANTAGE OF RESOURCES THAT  
ARE AVAILABLE TO THEM.

FOR EXAMPLE, 20% OF WOMEN AGE  
50 AND OVER DID NOT RECEIVE

A MAMMOGRAM IN THE LAST 2 YEARS.

I DID,  
JUST THE LAST 6 MONTHS,

SO I WANT TO SET A GOOD EXAMPLE.

AND 38% OF THE ADULTS AGE 50 AND  
OLDER HAVE NEVER HAD

A COLONOSCOPY OR  
A SIGMOIDOSCOPY.

AS YOU KNOW, TRADITIONALLY

SENIORS IN MEDICARE HAVE HAD TO

PAY 20% OF THE COST  
FOR PREVENTIVE CARE.

THE AFFORDABLE ACT ELIMINATES  
DEDUCTIBLES, CO-PAYMENTS,

AND OTHER COST-SHARING FOR THOSE  
BENEFICIARIES THAT ARE GOING TO

OBTAIN THOSE PREVENTIVE  
SERVICES, SO THAT'S GOOD NEWS.

WE WANT TO ENSURE THAT PEOPLE  
WITH MEDICARE TAKE ADVANTAGE

OF THESE PREVENTIVE  
OPPORTUNITIES TO LIVE A BETTER

QUALITY OF LIFE.

THE DONUT HOLE--WE ALL  
KNOW THE DONUT HOLE.

I REMEMBER THE AMOUNT OF  
MEDICATION MY MOM HAD LINED UP

ON THE COUNTER CABINET, AND SHE  
HIT THAT DONUT HOLE, AND IT WAS

A REAL AWAKENING TO ALL OF US.

BUT THERE'S HOPE FOR  
THE DONUT HOLE.

THE NEW YORK YANKEE MANAGER  
YOGI BERRA--YOU CAN TELL I'M

A BASEBALL FAN, RIGHT?--YOGI  
BERRA ONCE DESCRIBED THE GAME

OF GOLF IN THIS WAY: "80% OF THE  
BALLS THAT DON'T REACH THE HOLE

DON'T GET IN."

WHY, I IMAGINE THAT'S WHAT A  
LOT OF THE SENIORS HAVE BEEN

THINKING ABOUT THE PART  
D COVERAGE GAP.

"WHERE IS MY BENEFIT?"

IN A SOMEWHAT SIMILAR FASHION,  
WE KNOW THAT SENIORS

IN THE DONUT HOLE ARE FACED WITH  
HIGHER HEALTH COSTS THAT THEY'VE

KNOWN AND THAT THEY FORGO THE  
USE OF OTHER PRESCRIPTIONS DRUGS

SOMETIMES TO MAKE  
THOSE ENDS MEET.

MY MOTHER DID THE SAME THING AT  
ONE POINT WHEN SHE WAS HANDLING

HER OWN MEDICATION.

SHE'D CUT HER BLOOD  
PRESSURE PILLS IN HALF.

WE ALL KNOW THIS CAN INTERFERE  
WITH THE MANAGEMENT OF DISEASES

LIKE DIABETES AND HIGH BLOOD  
PRESSURE, AND THE OVERALL

EFFECTS OF HEALTH FOR SENIORS,  
WHICH IN TURN LEADS TO HIGH

HEALTH CARE COSTS FOR ALL OF US.

THE AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE ACT  
WILL CLOSE THAT MEDICARE PART D

COVERAGE GAP, AND THIS YEAR WILL  
HELP PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE PAY

FOR THEIR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS.

STARTING JUNE 15, SENIORS WHO  
HAVE REACHED THAT PRESCRIPTION

DRUG DONUT HOLE WILL GET A \$250

REBATE CHECK TO HELP THEM AFFORD

THEIR MEDICINES.

THAT IS JUST THE FIRST STEP.

NEXT YEAR, THEY WILL HAVE  
MORE DISCOUNTS IN THEIR

PRESCRIPTIONS, AND  
EVENTUALLY THE DONUT HOLE WILL

EVENTUALLY CLOSE.

BENEFICIARIES DO NOT HAVE TO DO  
ANYTHING TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN.

MEDICARE RECORDS WILL DETERMINE  
WHEN THE INDIVIDUAL IS ELIGIBLE

FOR THAT REBATE.

THE ISSUE OF FRAUD AND ABUSE--

THIS IS A MAJOR ISSUE FOR THE  
AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE ACT.

WE HAVE ALREADY SEEN--AND I'M  
SURE YOU HAVE AS WELL IN YOUR

STATES--SCAM ARTISTS TRYING TO  
CAPITALIZE ON THE NEW HEALTH

CARE LAW BY SETTING UP 1-800  
NUMBERS WHERE THEY CAN GET

PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION  
INFORMATION, SO WE ARE REMINDING

--AND YOU CAN CERTAINLY DO THE  
SAME--TO CONTINUE TO REMIND

PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE NOT TO GIVE  
OUT PERSONAL INFORMATION SUCH AS

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS TO  
ANYONE CALLING AND SAYING THAT

THEY CAN GET THEM A REBATE.

SECRETARY SIBELIUS SENT LETTERS  
TO STATE INSURANCE COMMISSIONERS

AND ATTORNEY GENERALS  
ASKING THEM TO INVESTIGATE

AND PROSECUTE THESE SCAMS.

FRAUD AND ABUSE RAISES  
MEDICARE COSTS FOR ALL SENIORS

AND TAXPAYERS, AND BENEFICIARIES  
PAY THE COST

WITH MEDICARE DOLLARS.

THE AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE ACT  
HAS SOME OF THE STRONGEST ANTI-

HEALTH CARE FRAUD  
PROVISIONS IN HISTORY.

OVER THE PAST YEAR AND A  
HALF WE'VE MADE GREAT STRIDES

IN FIGHTING FRAUD, WORKING  
WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

AND STATE AND LOCAL PARTNERS  
TO DEPLOY INNOVATIVE FRAUD-

FIGHTING STRATEGIES.

JUST LAST WEEK SECRETARY  
SIBELIUS AND ERIC HOLDER,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, MADE AN  
ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT THE FACT THAT

IN FISCAL YEAR 2009, ANTI-FRAUD  
EFFORTS PUT \$2.5 BILLION BACK

INTO THE MEDICARE TRUST FUND.

THAT'S A 29% INCREASE OVER  
THE PREVIOUS FISCAL YEAR.

THE AREA OF QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

--THIS IS SOMETHING YOU ALL WORK

ON EVERY DAY, AND I'M PLEASED  
TO SEE THAT THERE ARE SESSIONS

FOCUSED ON THIS ASPECT.

SOMEONE ONCE SAID THAT QUALITY  
IS NEVER AN ACCIDENT; IT IS

ALWAYS THE RESULT OF HIGH  
INTENTION, SINCERE EFFORT,

INTELLIGENT DIRECTION,  
AND SKILLFUL EXECUTION.

THE PRESIDENT AND THE  
SECRETARY ARE INTENT ON BUILDING

A MEDICARE SYSTEM THAT  
REWARDS HIGH-QUALITY CARE.

WE CONTINUE TO DEVELOP NATIONAL  
PRIORITIES ON HEALTH CARE

QUALITY, STANDARDIZING QUALITY  
MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING,

AND INVESTING IN PATIENT SAFETY.

WE'RE WORKING TO TURN  
MEDICARE INTO A QUALITY-DRIVEN,

HIGH- VALUE HEALTH  
CARE PURCHASER.

WHEN SENIORS WALK INTO A  
HOSPITAL OR A DOCTOR'S OFFICE,

THEY SHOULD GET THE BEST CARE  
POSSIBLE EACH AND EVERY TIME,

AND AS THE WORLD'S LARGEST  
INSURANCE PROGRAM, MEDICARE WILL

BE LEADING BY EXAMPLE.

THE AREA OF ELECTRONIC HEALTH  
CARE RECORDS--I'M PLEASED AGAIN

TO SEE THAT THERE ARE SESSIONS  
THAT FOCUS ON THIS IN THESE 2

DAYS OF TRAINING FOR YOU.

HEALTH CARE RECORDS AND  
E-PRESCRIBING--WE'LL BE ABLE TO

READ THOSE  
PRESCRIPTIONS NOW, RIGHT?

AS YOU KNOW, THE ADOPTION

BY DOCTORS AND HOSPITALS

OF ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS  
REDUCES MEDICAL ERRORS,

HELPS COORDINATE CARE,  
AND REDUCES COSTS AND PAPERWORK.

ELECTRONIC PRESCRIBING IMPROVES  
EFFICIENCIES WHILE HELPING TO

ELIMINATE POWERFULLY  
HARMFUL DRUG INTERACTIONS

AND MEDICATION ERRORS.

EARLIER THIS MONTH, THE  
NATIONAL COORDINATOR FOR HEALTH

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY GRANTED  
AWARDS TO 15 DIFFERENT ENTITIES

THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY,  
COMMUNITIES THAT WILL BUILD

AND STRENGTHEN THEIR HEALTH  
INFORMATION, TECHNOLOGY

INFRASTRUCTURE, AND  
EXCHANGE CAPABILITIES.

TULSA, OKLAHOMA, WAS ONE.

WE HAVE QUITE A FEW IN THIS  
REGION, AS WELL AS THROUGHOUT

THE REGION 7 AND REGION 4.

THESE COMMUNITIES WILL  
DEMONSTRATE THE VISION

OF A FUTURE WHERE HOSPITALS,  
CLINICIANS, AND PATIENTS ARE

MEANINGFUL USERS OF HEALTH I.T.,  
AND TOGETHER, THE COMMUNITY WILL

ACHIEVE MEASURABLE IMPROVEMENTS  
IN HEALTH CARE QUALITY, SAFETY,

EFFICIENCY, AND  
PREVENTIVE HEALTH.

THE PROGRAM WILL DEMONSTRATE HOW  
HEALTH I.T. CAN HELP PROVIDERS

AND CONSUMERS DEVELOP INNOVATIVE  
WAYS OF DELIVERING CARE THAT'S

SUSTAINABLE, EFFICIENT,  
AND MEASURABLE.

AN ADDITIONAL ASPECT THAT I  
WANT TO REMIND YOU ALL OF IS

THE WEB SITE.

THE WEB SITE  
HEALTHCAREREFORM.GOV PROVIDES

ONE-STOP SHOPPING FOR THE  
LATEST INFORMATION FROM H.H.S.

ON THE AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE  
ACT, AND THAT IS CHANGING

EVERY DAY.

THERE IS NEW INFORMATION ADDED,  
SO USE THAT RESOURCE.

THE SITE FEATURES THE LATEST  
FACT SHEETS, WEEKLY WEB CHATS,

AND OTHER UP-TO-DATE  
AND USEFUL INFORMATION.

THE SECRETARY ACTUALLY HAS WEB  
CHATS ON A WEEKLY BASIS THAT ARE

ARCHIVED, SO YOU CAN PUSH  
"REWIND" AND CATCH UP ON ANY

THAT YOU MAY HAVE MISSED.

SHE INVITES EXPERTS IN THE  
FIELD, INSURANCE RESOURCES,

INSURANCE STAFFING FOR THE NEW  
DIVISION THAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED

TO SUPPORT INSURANCE  
COMMISSIONERS, SO THAT'S

A WEALTH OF RESOURCE AND  
UP-TO- DATE INFORMATION.

PRESIDENT OBAMA AND SECRETARY  
SIBELIUS ARE COMMITTED TO

PROTECTING AND STRENGTHENING  
MEDICARE FOR AMERICA'S SENIORS.

MEDICARE IS A SACRED TRUST  
WITH OUR SENIORS, AS YOU KNOW,

AND WE MUST DO ALL WE CAN TO  
ENSURE THAT THAT TRUST IS

NOT BROKEN.

WE WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT  
DOLLARS ARE SPENT RESPONSIBLY

IN THE MEDICARE PROGRAM AND  
THAT WE FOCUS ON QUALITY.

THE TITLE OF THIS MEETING  
REFERENCES "A MOSAIC OF MORE."

A MOSAIC TAKES A WIDE  
VARIETY OF MATERIALS.

DIFFERENT TYPES, FORMS,  
AND COLORS ARE CREATED TO

COMPLETE A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE.

IN A SIMILAR WAY, I LOOK FORWARD  
TO WORKING WITH ALL OF YOU AS WE

PARTNER WITH HEALTH CARE  
ORGANIZATIONS, LOCAL PROVIDERS

AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS,  
STATE AGENCIES, AND ELECTED

OFFICIALS TO IMPLEMENT THE  
MANY CHANGES IN HEALTH CARE.

IT WILL REQUIRE THE MANY TALENTS  
OF ALL OF YOU AND OF ALL OF US

TO ENSURE THAT CONSUMERS AND  
PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE ARE FULLY

INFORMED ABOUT THEIR  
INSURANCE AND BENEFITS.

THIS IS ABOUT EMPOWERING  
CONSUMERS AND PROVIDING THEM

WITH INFORMATION AND RESOURCES  
TO MAKE THE BEST DECISIONS

FOR THEIR UNIQUE CIRCUMSTANCES.

IT'S ABOUT GIVING AMERICANS  
MORE CHOICE, MORE PEACE OF MIND,

AND SECURITY AND MORE CONTROL  
OVER HEALTH CHOICES.

IT'S ABOUT HIGH-QUALITY  
HEALTH CARE AND LOWER COSTS.

LAST WEEK, I WAS IN LOUISIANA,  
WHICH IS ONE OF MY STATES,

IN NEW ORLEANS, HELPING  
THEM CELEBRATE THE OPENING

OF AN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER,  
THE MAHALIA JACKSON EARLY

CHILDHOOD LEARNING CENTER,  
AND AS THEY WERE GIVING

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, IT WAS A  
WONDERFUL--THERE WERE 200 PEOPLE

THERE--WONDERFUL GROUP OF  
PEOPLE, NOT ONLY CONSUMERS THAT

WOULD BE USING THE SERVICES  
AND THE RESOURCES, BUT ALL THE

BENEFACTORS WHO HAD HELPED  
CONTRIBUTE TO MAKING THIS

RESTORATION OF A BUILDING IN  
ONE OF THE MORE DEVASTATED AREAS

OF NEW ORLEANS VIABLE AND A  
CONTRIBUTING ENTITY TO

THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY.

AND IN THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS,  
ONE OF THE CO-FOUNDERS THAT HAD

PUT ALL THESE INCREDIBLE--

TALK ABOUT A MOSAIC--PUT THESE  
INCREDIBLE PIECES TOGETHER,

SHE ACKNOWLEDGED A MAN IN A  
WHEELCHAIR, AND SHE SAID, "JOE,

THANKS FOR STICKING AROUND  
FOR THIS CELEBRATION."

WELL, I WENT OVER LATER AND  
TALKED TO HIM TO FIND OUT HIS

STORY, AND HE HAD BEEN ONE OF  
THE EARLY BENEFACTORS, AND HE

SAID, "AND THEN THE LIGHTS  
WENT OUT, AND 6 MONTHS LATER,

HERE I WAS."

WELL, HE HAD HAD A STROKE AND  
HE WAS IN A WHEELCHAIR, AND,

SO I JUST WENT OVER TO HEAR HIS  
STORY AND TALK TO HIS FAMILY.

WELL, YESTERDAY I GOT A NOTE,  
AN E-MAIL FROM HIS WIFE,

AND I WANT TO READ IT TO  
YOU BECAUSE THIS IS

NOT JUST ABOUT ME.

THIS IS ABOUT YOU, TOO.

SHE SAID, "DEAR MRS. PETTY,  
I WANTED TO TELL YOU HOW MUCH IT

MEANT TO ME AND TO MY HUSBAND  
JOE, HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS,

THAT YOU TOOK THE TIME TO  
SEEK HIM OUT AND TALK TO HIM

ABOUT HIS INVOLVEMENT IN THE  
MAHALIA JACKSON LEARNING CENTER.

YOU UNDERSTAND THAT PEOPLE  
WITH DISABILITIES OFTEN

BECOME INVISIBLE.

YOU, LIKE THE MANY WONDERFUL  
PEOPLE WHO SPEARHEADED THIS

PROJECT, AND THE WORK YOU DO  
WITH THE CLIENTS YOU SERVE,

ARE PUBLIC SERVANTS IN THE  
BEST SENSE OF THE WORDS.

LET US HOPE THAT THOSE OF US WHO  
WISH TO BRING LASTING CHANGE TO

NEW ORLEANS AND TO OUR COUNTRY  
CONTINUE TO INSPIRE EACH OTHER.

WITH GRATITUDE AND BEST WISHES  
FOR SUCCESS AND PERSONAL

SATISFACTION IN  
THE WORK YOU DO."

AND THAT'S WHAT I WOULD SAY TO  
YOU: CONGRATULATIONS FOR HOW FAR

YOU HAVE COME AND FOR OUR  
JOURNEY TOGETHER IN THE CREATION

OF THIS MOSAIC AS WE GO FORWARD,  
AND MY BEST WISHES TO YOU THAT

YOU HAVE SATISFACTION IN THE  
WORK YOU CONTINUE TO DO, AND MY

GRATITUDE FOR THAT.

THANK YOU SO MUCH.

[APPLAUSE]

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