

The Bill would authorize the use of chiropractors for treatment of medically indigent persons under our State program for medical care for indigent persons and would also authorize such usage under the Baltimore City program for medical care for the indigent.

In connection with my consideration of the Bill, representatives of the State Departments of Health and Mental Hygiene, the State Department of Public Welfare, the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland, the Maryland State Conference of Social Welfare, the Hospital Council of Maryland, the Heart Association of Maryland, the Maryland Cancer Society, the Maryland State Dental Association and other interested groups advanced serious arguments in opposition to the Bill.

Speaking in favor of the Bill were representatives of the Maryland State Board of Chiropractic Examiners, the Maryland Chiropractic Association and other interested groups and individuals.

Without expressing an opinion at this time as to the validity, vel non, of the respective arguments of the proponents and opponents of the Bill, I think that all will agree that the Maryland Medical Care Program for the medically indigent has achieved an enviable record of successful administration within the framework of the present law. Under the present law, medical care of the indigent is limited to physicians, dentists and hospitals. This Bill would make available to the medically indigent one additional field of the healing arts.

The opponents to this Bill made a convincing case that to broaden the law to include another type of care, namely chiropractic, would not be in the best interests of a good medical program. Serious doubt was raised as to the training and education of chiropractors. The Maryland State Health Department believes that chiropractic as a method of therapy has no sound scientific basis. The Commissioner of Health pointed out that they are not employed in the State hospitals or clinics.

This Bill would put chiropractic treatment in the State's program of medical care. I do not believe that I should attempt to determine the merits or demerits of chiropractic treatment. I do believe, however, that since there is general agreement that chiropractic treatment is not medical treatment, that it should not be included in the medical treatment program. I am hopeful that the two groups, medical and chiropractic, would get together and make an earnest effort to settle their differences.

*For the above reasons I feel compelled to veto this Bill.*

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

(s) J. MILLARD TAWES,

Governor.

JMT/ECM/ae