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For Release: These are prepared remarks. The Governor may deviate from them to add information. For more information contact Stephanie Smith, (608) 266-6925.

Governor's Press Conference
Announcing the
Wisconsin Health Care Partnership Plan
State Capitol
March 15, 1993

HEALTH CARE IS AT THE VERY TOP OF THE NATIONAL AGENDA TODAY. EVERY DAY YOU READ ABOUT THE NEW HEALTH CARE PLAN THEY'RE WORKING ON OUT IN WASHINGTON. YOU HEAR ALL SORTS OF GUESSES ABOUT WHAT THEY WILL DO ... AND WHAT THEY WON'T DO.

WELL, HERE IN WISCONSIN, WE AREN'T GOING TO SIT AROUND AND WAIT TO SEE WHAT WASHINGTON DOES. THAT'S NOT HOW WE OPERATE.

WE ARE TAKING STEPS TO DO SOMETHING RIGHT NOW ... BEGINNING ON OUR VERY OWN DOORSTEP.

THE STATE IS THE LARGEST HEALTH CARE CUSTOMER IN WISCONSIN. WHEN I BECAME GOVERNOR IN 1986, WE PAID \$93 MILLION FOR STATE EMPLOYEE HEALTH CARE.

THIS YEAR, THE BILL IS UP TO \$242 MILLION ... EVEN THOUGH THERE HAS BEEN ONLY A MODEST INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES ... AND EVEN THOUGH THERE HAS BEEN NO APPRECIABLE EXPANSION IN HEALTH CARE SERVICES PROVIDED. (chart 1)

THIS HEALTH CARE PARTNERSHIP PLAN THAT I AM ANNOUNCING TODAY IS A FRESH LOOK AT HOW HEALTH CARE COSTS EVOLVED ... AND IT IS A PLAN THAT TAKES THE LONG-TERM VIEW ON HOW TO GET A HANDLE ON THEM.

HEALTH CARE COSTS ARE SKYROCKETING ... WE ALL KNOW THAT. IN THE FIVE YEARS BETWEEN 1986 AND 1991, HEALTH CARE COSTS IN WISCONSIN ALONE ROSE BY 70% ... COMPARED TO ONLY A 24% INCREASE IN THE GENERAL COST OF LIVING. (chart 2)

THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW. AND -- AS WITH SO MANY OTHER CHALLENGES THAT WE FACE HERE IN WISCONSIN -- THE ONLY WAY WE ARE GOING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IS BY WORKING TOGETHER ... AS PARTNERS.

NO ONE GROUP IS TO BLAME FOR RISING HEALTH CARE COSTS ... AND NO ONE GROUP HAS ALL THE ANSWERS.

THAT IS WHY THIS PLAN IS A PARTNERSHIP -- A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR ... BETWEEN HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS ... BUSINESSES ... AND CITIZENS.

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2:
Gubernatorial Speeches.

THE PLAN IS AS FOLLOWS: (chart 3)

WE ARE ESTABLISHING LOCAL PURCHASING POOLS ... TO ENHANCE THE BUYING POWER OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES, AND TO MAKE SURE THEIR INTERESTS ARE REPRESENTED WITH A SINGLE VOICE.

WE ARE ALSO ESTABLISHING LOCAL HEALTH CARE COUNCILS. HEALTH CARE IS A LOCAL COMMODITY ... AND THOSE INVOLVED ON THE LOCAL LEVEL ARE IN THE BEST POSITION TO KNOW WHAT IS DRIVING HEALTH CARE COSTS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

THE COUNCILS WILL BE MADE UP OF HEALTH CARE PURCHASERS AND PROVIDERS ... AND THEY WILL FORM LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIPS TO MEET THE HEALTH CARE NEEDS OF THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES.

THESE COUNCILS:

- WILL SET FIVE-YEAR COST TARGETS FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE COMMUNITIES ... AND DETERMINE STRATEGIES NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THOSE GOALS;
- THEY WILL LOOK AT WAYS TO ADDRESS THE REAL COST DRIVERS IN THE SYSTEM;
- AND THEY WILL SET TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR HEALTH CARE COVERAGE PURCHASED THROUGH THE POOLS ... INCLUDING ESTABLISHING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR PRICE AND QUALITY.

STATE GOVERNMENT IS IN A UNIQUE POSITION. AS THE LARGEST EMPLOYER IN THE STATE, WE HAVE THE ABILITY -- AND THE RESPONSIBILITY -- TO TAKE A LEADING ROLE IN THIS PARTNERSHIP.

BUT I WANT TO EMPHASIZE THAT THIS IS A PARTNERSHIP. AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE HEALTH CARE IS THE GOAL. AND AS PARTNERS -- PRIVATE AND PUBLIC, PROVIDERS AND CONSUMERS -- WE CAN MOVE CLOSER TO MAKING THAT GOAL A REALITY.

THIS PLAN WILL CONTROL COSTS ... IT WILL OFFER INDIVIDUAL CHOICE ... AND IT WILL MAKE HEALTH CARE MORE ACCESSIBLE. (chart 4)

ONCE AGAIN, WE FIND WISCONSIN LEADING THE WAY.

OUR ECONOMY IS THE ENVY OF OUR NEIGHBORS ... WE ARE THE TALK OF THE NATION IN SCHOOL CHOICE AND WELFARE REFORM ... OUR SCHOOL-TO-WORK AND YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS ARE BREAKING NEW GROUND ...

AND THE WISCONSIN HEALTH CARE PARTNERSHIP PLAN WILL LEAD THE WAY IN HEALTH CARE REFORM.

WORKING TOGETHER, I KNOW THE WISCONSIN HEALTH CARE PARTNERSHIP PLAN WILL BE A SUCCESS.

THANK YOU.