

Although planning for health facilities is not of the same urgency as cost control, it needs a high priority for early attention by the Ad Hoc Committee. The Comprehensive Health Planning Committee which I recently appointed in compliance with Federal law should be evaluated and carefully considered as part of the permanent State framework.

The problems we face are not unique to Maryland. Other states are wrestling with equally critical ones in the health area. However, I believe that this Action Program is unique in that it recognizes that neither public health nor private health can any longer afford to go it alone, and attempts to cure the dissipations of effort by creating an effective partnership in the citizen's interest.

Questions and Answers

Q. Governor, there are several hospital cost control bills coming in during the session. I think Delegate Abrams is going to put hers in this week — Senator Lapidus has one. Would your appointing this committee charged to investigate this area preclude your support of any of this legislation for this session?

A. No, it would not preclude my support of legislation although I do think that it's very wise for us to attempt to consider legislation of a package nature after study by the committee. You note that I have included Delegate Abrams on this group. Part of the responsibility of this committee will be to consider whatever legislation is introduced in this session of the Legislature and to make recommendations to me, and possibly to attempt to influence the legislation by bringing to the attention of its sponsors any constructive criticisms or comments concerning it.

Q. Governor, this session is over in 65 more days. If a package that the committee can agree on comes after that would you call a special session of the Legislature to consider it?

A. No, I don't think that the areas of the committee that I have pointed out are short-term areas. They are mostly ones that can be handled by executive order or executive decision within the department. The long-term restructuring of health services of a governmental nature, which will take a considerably longer time, will require legislation but probably won't be completed by this committee in time for anything expedient to be accomplished much before the next legislative session.

Q. Governor, I was thinking mostly about cost control.