

CHESTER BOWLES
ESSEX, CONNECTICUT

September 3, 1948

Dear Mrs. Lasker:

I appreciate very much the fact sheets on health which arrived in the mail the other day. There's a tremendous amount of material here which I can use.

I am anxious to develop a model state program. A friend of mine, Steve Bailey, who is an economist at Wesleyan, is now in Washington getting whatever information he can from the Social Security, who seem to have the best background on what has been done on a state basis.

The California program which Governor Warren put through is, I understand, the most advanced state program. Perhaps I should pick it up and sponsor it for Connecticut. This would make it hard for the Republicans to attack it.

However, I would like to get your views on an alternative program that two or three of us have been considering. This proposal would be specifically designed to help families who had suffered a serious illness -- the kind which wipes out family savings and which every working family dreads. It is extremely simple.

1. An family earning less than \$3,000 a year would be insured against any medical, hospital and doctor's bills which in a single year total more than \$150 for the family.
2. Any family earning between \$3,000 and \$10,000 would be compensated by the State for any such bills which exceeded in a single year 5% of the family income. In other words, a family earning \$6,000 would be compensated for hospital, medical and doctor's bills in excess of \$300.

I have tried to keep this as simple as possible although perhaps it is too simple. The idea originally came from a rather offhand suggestion of the head of the Hartford Hospital. He estimated at the time that it would cost the state about one million dollars a year. One advantage seems to be that doctors, hospitals, and druggists, who now are often unable to collect from patients for serious illnesses,

would welcome a guarantee of full compensation. We might help ease our problem with the Connecticut Medical Association by asking ~~them~~ to establish a code and a standard of payments on all bills paid for by the State.

Dr. Peters of Yale is checking into this proposal and I expect to hear from him soon. I am wondering if I am right in thinking he is a reliable person?

It has been very hard to get to New York because my days have been filled to overflowing with speeches, visits around the state, organization work, etc. But I am planning to come in for the day on Monday, September 13th. If you are back from the country, perhaps we can get together then.

My best regards and many thanks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Oscar Lewis". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed word "Sincerely,".

Mrs. Albert D. Lasker
Chrysler Building
New York 17, N.Y.