

# Better Times

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## Stay Granted in Court Decision Denying Rate Increase to HIP

NEW YORK, N.Y. (B/T)—The State Dept. of Health and Insurance which was given a stay of execution of a verdict by State Supreme Justice Xavier C. Riccobono (Manhattan) which declared a 12% across the board annual increase in rates to *Health Insurance Plan of Greater New York Inc.* (625 Madison Ave.), to be "void and of no effect," is filling an appeal to the *State Appellate Division* in an effort to retain the increase, which was granted last April by the *State Insurance Dept.* The decision in effect rolled back *H.I.P.* rates to those existing prior to April 1976.

The *Health Insurance Plan of Greater New York Inc. (H.I.P.)* is entering the appeal as an intervenor in its own behalf, as was the case in the original suit against the *State Dept. of Health and Insurance*, resulting in Supreme Court Justice Riccobono's decision.

The suit, filed by Donald Rubin and others, was based on a provision of the *Health* law which mandates *State Health Dept.* examination and approval before the *State Insurance Dept.* can act upon a rate increase application. The Supreme Court Justice held with the plaintiffs (Rubin et al) that this procedure had not been complied with, and that the increase was therefore "void and of no further effect."

The *Consumer Commission on the Accreditation of Health Services*, a non-profit organization with headquarters at 331 Park Ave. South, N.Y. 10016, of which Mr. Rubin is president, will defend Justice Riccobono's decision in the Appellate Division Proceedings.

The Consumer Commission provides consumer education in the non-profit field.

Mr. Rubin has hailed the Supreme Court verdict as "having a significance beyond

even the rollback in *H.I.P.* fees." "Now," Mr. Rubin continued, "*H.I.P.* (and other) increases will no longer simply be rubber-stamped by the Superintendent of Insurance without the benefit of a *State Health* dept. review of the cost, adequacy and quality of care."

The State Superintendent of Insurance vigorously denied that any "rubber stamping" was involved, and members of his department were confident the lower court's ruling would be overturned.

One estimate of the annual revenues involved in the rate increase was at or about some \$7 million per year. If the lower court decision were to be upheld, the City of New York would be the heaviest gainer (with *H.I.P.* the loser; most city employees are covered by the *H.I.P.* health plan.

*H.I.P.* through its constituent medical groups, provides medical care on a group contract basis to more than 750,000 New Yorkers.

## In Memoriam

J. CLARENCE DAVIES, JR.

Memorial services were held Sunday, Feb. 6 for J. Clarence Davies Jr., who died Feb. 2 at age 64, while on a business trip to Cleveland, Ohio. Services were at *Temple Shaaray Tefila*, 250 E. 79 St. Death apparently came from a sudden heart attack.

Mr. Davies, whose homes were at 215 E. 68 St. and Lake Placid, New York, was honored at the memorial service as the quintessence of public spirited citizenship, having achieved preeminence not only in the real estate field, but in governmental and voluntary non-paid humanitarian services, as well as in the field of amateur sports.

Survivors include his widow, Helen Wolfe Davies, two sons, J. Clarence Davies III and Alan Valentine Davies, and three grandchildren.

As a public servant Mr. Davies spear-headed reform of the *Bureau of Real Estate*,

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## Big Sisters Inc. Get Two Grants in Aid From Foundations

NEW YORK, N.Y. (B/T) — John A. Jager, Executive Director of *The Big Sisters, Inc.*, a family counseling agency located in the *New York County Family Court*, has announced the award of grants by the *Herman Goldman Foundation* and the *Heckscher Foundation for Children*. Working within the *Family Court*, *The Big Sisters* with administration offices at 60 Lafayette St., N.Y. 10013, provides preventive and treatment counseling to girls, boys and their families. Marital counseling is also available at the agency. All services are provided by well trained, MSW social caseworkers. Psychological and psychiatric testing is also available.

The *Herman Goldman Foundation* approved a grant of \$15,000, primarily to finance an additional masters level caseworker to allow the *Big Sisters* to continue providing quality counseling to its clients referred by the court and other social service agencies. The *Goldman Foundation's* concern is with socially and economically deprived persons, social development, justice, education and the arts. Payment of the grant will begin on March 1.

The *Heckscher Foundation for Children*, made a grant of \$1,245 toward the purchase of furniture and equipment needed to outfit

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Family and group day care homes whose sponsoring organizations participate in the child care food program may now use higher food cost factors, the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture announced, noting that increased factors were adjusted to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The adjustments, effective Jan. 1st (Federal Register Jan. 21) reflect the 2.814 percent increase for the 6-month period June through Nov. 1976, in the Dept. of Labor's CPI series for food away from home. The new food cost factors are: 42.25 cents for each lunch or supper (up from 41 cents); 23.75 cents for each breakfast (up from 23 cents); and 14.50 cents for each supplement (up from 14 cents). Sponsoring organizations can use food cost factors instead of actual food costs for all family and group day care homes under their jurisdiction.

## NASW PROTEST THURSDAY FEB. 17

A membership meeting, New York City Chapter, National Association of Social Workers, to protest the proposed cuts in public assistance and Medicaid benefits outlined in the State budget presented by Governor Hugh L. Carey, has been called for 7 P.M. sharp Thursday, February 17 at the auditorium, Hunter College School of Social Work, 129 E. 79 St. and Lexington Ave. No admission fee. Speakers include State Senator Major R. Owens (D.-Bklyn), Martin Abramowitz, co-author of the 1975 Moss study analyzing the devastating effect of home relief benefit eliminations there; and others, including an AFDC recipient. All members are urged to attend.

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