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COMMITTEES:
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

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August 5, 1968

Dear Delegate:

On May 16 of this year, I introduced H.R. 17331, the first legislative proposal to provide a guaranteed annual income for all Americans.

The bill establishes a Bureau of Income Maintenance in the Department of the Treasury. Individuals could apply for income maintenance benefits by filing simple monthly income statements and would receive benefits based on the deficiency of their other earnings. A family of four with no money earnings would receive maintenance benefits of approximately \$167 per month or \$2000 per year. A family of six would receive \$245 monthly, or approximately \$3000 per year.

Enforcement would be on a spot-check basis similar to Internal Revenue enforcement. At the level of benefits in H.R. 17331, the net cost would be about \$4.1 billion annually.

This plan would not eliminate poverty in America, but it will be of enormous benefit to the 22,000,000 Americans living in poverty who receive no public assistance whatever. It will also increase the incomes of most of the 8,000,000 Americans who do receive some form of public assistance.

By and large, present welfare programs have not worked. My proposal is not designed as a substitute for jobs, but rather as a substitute for welfare. It provides a minimal income, with dignity, for those who cannot work, or who cannot find jobs that pay a living wage.

Income maintenance will undoubtedly receive the serious consideration of both national political conventions. It has the endorsement of several study commissions, numerous businessmen and economists, and liberals and conservatives. My bill offers a model of a workable guaranteed income program, and I am hopeful that both conventions will adopt platform planks supporting a plan along similar lines to promote early legislative action by the next Congress.

I am enclosing a more detailed description of my bill, and I will appreciate your support of this concept as part of the platform.

With best regards,

Sincerely,

William F. Ryan

William F. Ryan
Member of Congress