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New Hopes For National Health Bill

Washington

Richard Nixon's resignation improves the chance of national health insurance being passed this year, Caspar Weinberger, secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, said yesterday.

Addressing 700 employees in the HEW auditorium and tens of thousands of others across the country through telephone hookup, Weinberger said President Gerald Ford had asked everyone in the department to stay on the job.

"As far as I know, we'll all still be here," the secretary said.

As a result of Mr. Nixon's resignation, Weinberger said, "we have an even better chance of the possibility of national health insurance this year."

The House Ways and Means Committee, after several weeks of hearings on competing health insurance bills, has begun drafting its own legislation.

The Senate Finance Committee suspended its hearings earlier in the summer and, anticipating a Senate impeachment trial, veteran congressional observers had seen little chance for the passage of legislation this year.

Associated Press