AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

House she has been my senior domestic policy adviser. For more than 10 years, she's been right down the hall or by my side, and now I look forward to having her take her seat in the Cabinet Room.

It's good to be here with members of her family. I've known her husband for a while, Robert Spellings. It's good that Robert and Britain are with us. Mary and Grace are with us as well, Margaret's daughters. Her parents, John and Peg Dudar, are here, as are other members of her family. Welcome to Washington, DC.

I'm pleased Members of the Congress have come. I am so grateful that Senator Ted Kennedy and Senator Mike Enzi are with us today. Thank you both for coming. I appreciate Congressmen John Boehner, Ralph Regula, and Mac Thornberry from Texas for being here. You're very gracious to take time to be here. Thank you all for being here.

Looking around, I see other nominees for the Cabinet and members of our administration, all fans of Margaret. I see a few Texans have come up from the great State. Thank you all for being here. We're honored you're here. I know Margaret is especially honored you're here.

She will be an outstanding Secretary of Education. She has been involved in all our efforts to strengthen American public schools. She was instrumental in getting the No Child Left Behind Act passed, that will help raise standards in our public schools. She believes, as I do, that every child can learn, and that every school must teach.

In the past 4 years, we have made great strides. Today, children across America are scoring higher on State reading and math tests. The achievement gap in America is closing. We've made important progress, but Margaret understands there is still more work to be done.

We will maintain the high standards of No Child Left Behind. We will extend those high standards and accountability to America's public high schools. Today, only about 60 out of every 100 students entering our public high schools ever make it to graduation 4 years later. Margaret understands, as do I, that is unacceptable. We're committed to ensuring that every high school student succeeds and leaves with the skills he or she needs to succeed in college or the workplace.

Because most new jobs in our 21st century economy will require post-secondary education or training, Margaret understands we need to make higher education more affordable and accessible for all Americans. We will reform the student aid system and increase college assistance for low-income students. We'll increase the maximum award for Pell grants and make them available to students year-round. And we will expand access to community colleges, so that more Americans can develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the workplace.

Margaret is the right person to carry out a reform agenda. She is talented. She is smart. She is capable, and she is a lot of fun to be around. [*Laughter*] She is a mom. She has a personal stake in the success of our Nation's schools. She knows that to build on the progress of No Child Left Behind, the Government, the President, and the Secretary of Education and those who work in this building must listen to those closest to our children—their parents, their teachers, and their principals. She will be a thoughtful and determined leader of this Department. The people who work in this building will find out that they are very lucky to have been led by the likes of Margaret Spellings. I am proud to welcome her into my Cabinet.

Margaret.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:47 a.m. at the U.S. Department of Education. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Spellings.

Remarks Honoring the 2004 National Basketball Association Champion Detroit Pistons

January 31, 2005

Thank you all. Please be seated. Gosh, what an honor it is to welcome the mighty Detroit Pistons to the White House. With all the fans here and the players, I guess you'd expect to hear somebody ringing the gong. [*Laughter*] I love to welcome champs to the people's home.

I also am glad to welcome members of the Michigan delegation: Senator Levin, thank

you for coming; Congressman Kildee; Congressman Levin—that would be Senator Levin's brother. [*Laughter*] Joe Knollenberg is here. Thanks for coming, Joe. It's great to see you. Congressman Carolyn Kilpatrick—that would be the mom of the mayor. [*Laughter*] I'm sure the mayor was there during the celebration. Candice Miller is with us. Thank you all for coming. I'm honored that you're here to welcome your favorite team.

I'm proud to be on the—sharing the stage with Coach Larry Brown. The guy must know what he's doing, you know? [*Laughter*] He's NCAA champs with the Kansas Jayhawks and now is a professional basketball coach that won the NBA crown.

Bill Davidson—I've known Bill Davidson in the past. He is a true gentleman, a great civic leader in the Detroit area. Mr. Davidson, thank you for being here. Congratulations on the championship. Oscar Feldman, part-owner of the Pistons is with us. Thank you for coming, Oscar.

Joe Dumars and Bill Laimbeer—both of them came to the White House as champs. As I recall, you came here in '89 and '90—I'm aware of who was living here then. [*Laughter*] Welcome back. Congratulations to Joe as the president of basketball operations—Mr. President. And Bill, of course, is the coach of the Shock, who we welcomed here to the Rose Garden last—2 years ago.

Tom Wilson, the president of Palace Sports and Entertainment. I want to thank all the players and your families who've come. Welcome. I hope you've gotten a tour of this majestic place. It's a special place to work and live.

I want to congratulate Chauncey Billups for being the NBA Championship Series MVP.

So nobody expected you to win. I know how you feel. [*Laughter*] You won because you put a team together. You had people willing to serve something greater than yourself, and it's a wonderful example for kids on playgrounds or people in all walks of life. I guess you kind of just played it the right way. I think that's what the coach says, "Play it the right way." That's how we should live life. That's what champs do. They set an example.

As you know, a lot of kids look at you. They see you as the big star. They wonder what life should be like, and every time you set an example for a kid to make a right choice in life, you're helping save a life. And I want to thank you for the extent that you do that.

I also appreciate the fact that you've been involved in great causes like teaching children how to read. I can't think of a more important cause than lending a gift of knowledge to a child. I remember the time in Houston, Texas, when a woman walked up to me and she said, "Reading is the new civil right." I thought that was such a powerful phrase. If you believe that, if you believe you liberate people by teaching them to read, consider yourself liberators as a result of being in the program, "Read To Achieve."

I want to thank you for setting an example for the tsunami relief effort. As you might remember, I tapped two former Presidents, 41 and 42—that would be my dad and President Clinton—to join together to help raise money. I suspect basketball players probably have a little more pull than they do. And so I want to thank you for setting an example of serving people who hurt. In other words, you have taken your great championship status and converted it to good, and that's good.

And so we're here to congratulate you for being the great champs that you are. And by the way, I also want to thank you for providing entertainment for our troops overseas. I don't know if you know this or not, but a lot of people overseas support professional basketball. Professional basketball provides great relief from their duty and entertainment, a reminder of what life is like back home, and I suspect a lot of them are Detroit Pistons fans as well.

So thank you for what you're doing, supporting those who have helped make this world a more peaceful and free place. In other words, welcome to the White House, and congratulations for being called champs. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:05 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks,

he referred to Mayor Kwame M. Kilpatrick of Detroit, MI, son of Representative Carolyn C. Kilpatrick; Bill Davidson and Oscar Feldman, owners, and Joe Dumars, president of basketball operations, Detroit Pistons; and Bill Laimbeer, head coach, Detroit Shock, Women's National Basketball Association.

Proclamation 7866—American Heart Month, 2005

February 1, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The miracles of modern medicine offer hope to those affected by heart disease, yet there are also simple measures that Americans can take to help prevent the disease. During American Heart Month, I encourage all Americans to take action to help reduce their risk and increase awareness of heart disease.

The steps to a healthy heart include preventing and controlling factors that can lead to heart disease—smoking, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, physical inactivity, obesity, and diabetes. By avoiding tobacco, limiting consumption of alcohol, exercising regularly, eating a nutritious diet, and maintaining a healthy weight, Americans can substantially reduce their risk of developing cardiovascular disease.

I also urge citizens to get routine preventative screenings and consult with their doctors. Through these commonsense steps, we can save many of the lives we might otherwise lose each year to heart disease.

Although heart disease is often associated with men, it is the leading cause of death for American women: Nearly 500,000 American women die from cardiovascular disease each year. The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute—part of the National Institutes of Health at the Department of Health and Human Services—and other national organizations have launched a national campaign called "The Heart Truth" to educate women about heart disease and to encourage them to make their health a priority. The symbol of "The Heart Truth" campaign is the red dress, which reminds women to talk with their doctors about heart disease and to make healthy choices. In addition, the American Heart Association has launched the "Go Red For Women" campaign to reach out to more women across our country. By continuing to raise public awareness about this deadly disease, we can help all our citizens lead healthier lives.

In recognition of the importance of the ongoing fight against heart disease, the Congress, by Joint Resolution approved December 30, 1963, as amended (77 Stat. 843; 36 U.S.C. 101), has requested that the President issue an annual proclamation designating February as "American Heart Month."

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim February 2005 as American Heart Month, and I invite all Americans to participate in National Wear Red Day by wearing a red dress, shirt, or tie on February 4, 2005. I also invite the Governors of the States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, officials of other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and the American people to join me in our continuing commitment to fighting heart disease.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., February 4, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on February 7.

Proclamation 7867—Centennial of the Forest Service, 2005

February 1, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In 2005, the Department of Agriculture's Forest Service celebrates a century of service to our Nation. After President Theodore Roosevelt established the Forest Service as part of the Department of Agriculture in