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Now, let me say—you heard the Vice President with that quote from the Republican consultants say, "Let's send them home empty-handed." We've done that a lot, you know. We've done that a lot. It took 5 years to pass the ADA. When I showed up in town here, it had taken 7 years until we could finally pass the Brady bill last year—7 years—7 years; 7 years until we could finally pass the family and medical leave law last year—very important to you; 7 years until we could finally get the worldwide trade agreement that will add a half a million jobs in America between now and the end of the decade. A lot of times, if you want bipartisan consensus on a tough issue, it takes forever. But I tell you, we dare not wait longer. For 60 years, Presidents of both parties have known we should cover all Americans. We now see health care costs going up, and the only Government spending going up is in health care while we are desperately trying to bring this deficit down and invest in our future. And we know that in only 5 years, 5 million Americans have lost their coverage.

We are at an historic moment. For the first time ever, there are bills on the floor of both Houses of the Congress that will give Americans health care. We must say we don't care about politics. There are Democrats and Republicans and independents in this audience. There are people here today who voted for all three people who ran for President last time. I do not give a rip what your politics are, but I do want you to have health care so you can contribute to America's future.

Audience members. Health care now! Health care now! Health care now!

The President. That's right. Let me say this, I love these chants, but this is what often happens in our society: We're all here preaching to the saved. And I ask you, I ask you to go to the Congress with a simple message, and to go back home to your communities with a simple message. Let us discard politics. Let us put people first. And let our focus be simply this: what will work.

I have no pride of authorship. Nothing would please me more than if somebody else's name, 100 names, 400 names, 500 names in both Houses of Congress would be on a health care bill, but we dare not do something which holds out false hopes. Let's do what works. Let's complete the work of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Let's say to the whole world, this is one country that knows we don't have a person to waste, and we're going into the next century with all of our people, arm-in-arm.

God bless you. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:08 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. The proclamation of July 26 on the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Honoring the NCAA Women's Basketball Champion University of North Carolina Tar Heels

July 27, 1994

I apologize for being a little late. I've been on the phone with Members of the Congress, which I had to do. Senator Helms, Congressman Valentine, Congressman Lancaster, Congressman Price; I think Congressman McMillan's out there somewhere. Alex. It's good to see all of you, ladies and gentlemen. It's a great honor for me to have this basketball team here, if only to see them all looking normal after I watched that incredible end to the championship game. The University of North Carolina women's basketball team not only won its first national title this year but had the best record in the country and the school record, 33 wins. Coach Sylvia Hatchell broke the 400-career-victories mark and was named National Coach of the Year. But my guess is that—actually, I wanted to ask her this, whether when the team spray-painted her hair Carolina blue, it made it worthwhile, or she began to wonder. [*Laughter*]

I want to say, of course, a special word of congratulations to Charlotte Smith for that three-point shot. I can tell you I've been in a lot of tough fights myself around here, and there have been a lot of times when I've looked

around for somebody who could take that shot. [*Laughter*] And I want to congratulate Tonya Sampson, who I know has overcome some considerable personal challenges to be the leading scorer in Carolina women's basketball history.

I also want to say something that I have felt for a long time—and it's appropriate this year because North Carolina women's basketball and soccer teams won the NCAA titles, and so often in the past your men's basketball team has done so well—the thing I have always admired about the University of North Carolina is it's been a place that emphasized both academics and athletics and other extracurricular activities. And it's demonstrated to the country that it is not necessary to make a choice, and that there's something to be said for learning how to compete, to work on a team, to put aside your own personal ambitions for what is best for a group, and that an institution like the University of North Carolina, which I had the opportunity to join in celebrating its 200th birthday just a few months ago, can really set a standard for the entire country. And it's something that I hope not only other colleges and universities will look at but our school systems as well.

I get very concerned when I travel around the country and I see so many children growing up in difficult circumstances and they're going to schools that are no longer able to finance their team sports programs, their athletic programs, their music programs, the things that give children a chance to get out of themselves and reach beyond themselves and to grow and be part of something important. And I don't believe those things should ever be held to be in conflict with or adverse to developing our intellectual faculties that God gave us.

So the University of North Carolina is truly a symbol, it seems to me, of what our country ought to be striving for in the personal development of all of its students. And I'm especially glad to see the triumph of the women athletes this year. It's something that my wife and my daughter and my beloved mother, if she were still living, would always be very happy to see me here honoring today.

I thank you all, and I congratulate you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:50 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to team members Charlotte Smith, forward, and Tonya Sampson, guard.

Statement on Protection of Voting Rights

July 27, 1994

Over the past 30 years, the protection of voting rights, and the resulting increase in the number of minority representatives in Congress, has been a testament to our enduring democracy. Now, it is increasingly clear that a direct attack is being mounted on electoral districts that contain African-American or Hispanic population majorities. In the face of this attack, the position of this administration is clear: We are committed to the gains made by minority voters through enforcement of the Voting Rights Act.

When the Voting Rights Act was passed in 1965 with support from Democrats and Republicans alike, it was properly viewed as central to our Nation's efforts to eradicate racial discrimination. It seeks not only to increase the number of minority representatives, as important as that is. More fundamentally, it ensures that minority voters have an opportunity to cast meaningful votes and to elect candidates of their choice, particularly in those areas where politics are racially or ethnically polarized.

At my instruction, Attorney General Janet Reno and Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Deval L. Patrick are vigorously defending the congressional districts that are currently being challenged. Under their leadership the United States has either intervened as a party or become involved as a friend of the court in every one of these challenges. Ironically, these districts are the most integrated congressional districts in the Nation. Under the leadership of Deval Patrick, the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division is working hard to ensure that the Constitution has meaning for minority voters by making the case that these districts stay intact. I agree wholeheartedly that he