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Remarks to the NCAA Champion Lake Superior State University Hockey Team

May 6, 1994

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Just minutes before his team took the ice against the Russians—and some of these young people were too young to remember that thrilling Olympic victory in 1980—but Herb Brooks told his team that they were born to play the game. He said, "You were meant to be here at this time. This is your moment."

Well, Senator Levin and Congressman Stupak, I thank you for your help in making this event possible. And today I say to the players, the coaches, and the other supporters of the Lake Superior State hockey team, welcome to the White House. This is your moment.

I want to give my best regards to Bob Arbuckle, the president of LSSU; Jeff Jackson, the head coach of the Lakers. And I want to talk a little about this team. But before I do, I have to say something about another Michigan moment. During this last winter, the coldest we'd had here in 100 years, a deep freeze struck the Upper Peninsula, causing extensive damage to the infrastructure of the region.

The State of Michigan requested a major disaster declaration through our emergency management agency to provide assistance to 10 counties. I have just been advised by the Director of FEMA, James Lee Witt, that his agency is reviewing the State's request, and he expects to recommend to me on Monday that a major disaster declaration is warranted with a preliminary estimate of $7.1 million, which is expected to increase as the thawing continues. I want to thank Representative Stupak and Senator Levin and Senator Riegle for their interest in the matter and say that I hope the thawing continues in the Upper Peninsula, Mr. Stupak.

Now, back to the school. It's relatively small, 3,400 students, and smaller than many of your competitors. And yet, by concentrating on the fundamentals, concentrating on quality, year after year you produce excellence: three national titles in 7 years, two in the last 3 years; three straight NCAA championship games.

Be proud not just because you're champions but, more important, because of what made you champions: hard work, determination, discipline, loyalty, and teamwork. I hope each of you will take that example into your communities and on into your lives. There are too many young people in America who don't have the kind of hope you have, no one to push them forward or no one to cheer for them.

Tonight and tomorrow, people all over this country will now see a picture of you here, and some child will be inspired to work harder. Because of you, he or she will believe that they can do more with their lives, make more of themselves, and make a difference.

If I could leave one message today, it would be this: Never underestimate the impact of this achievement on other people, especially young people. President Kennedy once said, "One man can make a difference, and every man should try." I hope all of you will do that.

Again, welcome to the White House.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:13 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Herb Brooks, 1980 U.S. Olympic hockey team coach.

Statement on the Death of Mike Walsh

May 6, 1994

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to hear of the death of our good friend Mike Walsh. His friendship and advice will be sorely missed. Our prayers and sympathies are with his family during this difficult time.