

if we want to see the baby boomers retire in dignity without imposing unfair burdens on our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren, we must act now.

I must say, I was disappointed a couple of days ago that the Senate majority leader said he may not now want to join me in reforming Social Security next year. If we don't, then there will be more pressure to squander this money on tax cuts or spending programs. I think that is unhelpful. We know that we can make modest changes now that have a huge impact down the road, in much the way that modest investments in research now have a huge impact down the road on health care. And I believe this is an issue which really binds the American people, not only across generations but across political parties. None of us—none of us—wants to leave a legacy of burdening our children to support our retirement or risking that those of us who, unlike me, won't have a good pension, will face an undignified and impoverished old age just because the demographics are changing in America. So we need progress, not partisanship, on Social Security.

Now, there are 436 days left in this millennium. It can—it should be a time when we redouble our efforts to honor our parents, to strengthen our Nation, to prepare for our children's future, and to honor the tenacity and courage that those of you here have shown every day in dealing with this great challenge.

Again, let me say, I am very proud of what this budget did for cancer research. I'm very proud of what we are doing together to deal with the challenge of breast cancer. I want you to know that, that I believe that we are within reach of genuine cures and genuine prevention strategies of stunning impact. And we have to remember that on the things that really count, whether it's cancer research or saving Social Security or educating our children, this country needs to be united. This country needs to be reconciled to one another, all of us, across all the lines that divide us. There are plenty of things to fight about. But on the fundamental things, we need to be one. That is, parenthetically, the argument I've been making for a week out at the Middle East peace talks.

The only way that life ever really works is when we understand that the only victories that have lasting impacts are not victories over other people but victories for our common humanity. And that's what I'm going to work for now. To me, that's what every day your struggle against breast cancer symbolizes. And I'm very grateful to all of you.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:15 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. H.R. 4328, the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999, approved October 21, was assigned Public Law No. 105-277.

## Statement on Senate Action To Confirm Jane E. Henney as Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration

*October 21, 1998*

I am extremely pleased that today the Senate, with strong bipartisan support, overwhelmingly voted to confirm Dr. Jane E. Henney to be the next Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration. I am confident that as the first woman and first oncologist to be confirmed as FDA Commissioner, Dr. Henney will live up to the trust the Senate has placed in her.

The Nation now has an FDA Commissioner who is committed to assuring that Americans have safe food, safe and effective drugs and medical devices, and improved public health. Dr. Henney has blazed many trails, and no one

is more qualified to lead the FDA. She has served four Presidents and helped guide some of America's finest academic health centers. Her expertise in science and technology and lifelong dedication to individual patients will enable her to strike the important balance between the need for timely approval of prescription drugs and medical devices, while maintaining safety and quality.

I commend the Democrats and Republicans who worked to give Dr. Henney a full and fair hearing and help expedite this confirmation. I also want to thank representatives of consumers,

physicians, nurses, and the industry for their steadfast and strong support for Dr. Henney. Their combined leadership made a vital con-

tribution toward assuring we have the right person to lead the FDA into the 21st century.

## Statement on Signing the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 *October 21, 1998*

Today I have signed into law H.R. 4194, the "Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999."

This Act will fund vital environmental, veterans, housing, community development, space, and science programs. Specifically, it provides funding for the Departments of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the National Science Foundation, and several other agencies.

The Act funds a number of my Administration's high priorities, including the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) fund. National Service gives young people the opportunity to obtain funding for a college education while serving the country in areas of great need, such as the environment, public safety, and human services. The CDFI fund is helping to create a network of community development banks across the country, thereby spurring the flow of capital to distressed neighborhoods and their currently underserved low-income residents and providing financing for neighborhood redevelopment and revitalization efforts. That is why I am pleased that the Congress agreed to a 19 percent increase in funding for CDFI.

The Act provides \$7.56 billion for the EPA, which will enable the agency to enforce our environmental laws adequately. I am pleased that the Congress modified language in the Act concerning the Kyoto Protocol on global climate change and clarified what this language means in the Statement of Managers. In particular, the Congress made it clear that it does not intend to limit my Administration's ability to carry out

common-sense actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; its intent, rather, is only to limit funding that would implement actions called for solely under the Kyoto Protocol. As we have said on many occasions, my Administration will not seek to implement that Protocol prior to its ratification by the Senate. I am also pleased that H.R. 4194 fully funds my request for EPA's portion of the Clean Water Action Plan and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, and adequately funds the Clean Water State Revolving Fund.

The Act provides \$24.4 billion in funding for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, including full funding for my request to renew expiring Section 8 contracts, thus assuring continuation of HUD rental subsidies for low-income tenants in privately owned housing and 50,000 additional welfare-to-work housing vouchers to assist those welfare recipients for whom housing assistance is critical to getting or keeping a job. This Act provides increased funding to help revitalize communities through such programs as the HOME Investment Partnership; Community Development Block Grants; and HOPE VI, an initiative for severely distressed public housing and Brownfields redevelopment, which returns abandoned sites to productive uses. I am pleased that the bill continues to support States and cities through these vital economic development programs.

As I requested, the Act provides increased funding for Homeless Assistance Grants and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS and for anti-discrimination efforts, including the Fair Housing Initiatives program. The Act also increases funds for the Office of Lead Hazard Control to reduce the risk of childhood lead poisoning and other health hazards.

I am encouraged by our efforts to work with the Congress to provide additional resources for