

Morella was a candidate for reelection in Maryland's Eighth Congressional District.

Exchange With Reporters on Departure for Camp David, Maryland June 28, 2002

President's Health

Q. Mr. President, what's the story?

The President. Hold on, I'll tell you.

As you know, I've been recommending that Americans take precautionary measures for their health and that people should be screened on a regular basis, particularly those of us over 50. And tomorrow I'm going to have a colonoscopy at Camp David. It is the third such procedure I've had. The doctor has recommended I have another one, because the last time they found some benign polyps. And so this is kind of a routine physical examination that will be done at Camp David.

I'm going—I'm going to be sedated for a period of time and will transfer power to the Vice President during that time. And I look forward to exercising tomorrow afternoon, after the procedure takes place.

Q. Do you know how long it's going to be, sir?

The President. Well, it's—you know, the last time I did this, it wasn't very long. I mean, the definition of long—the docs will be briefing here pretty soon. But you know, it shouldn't take too long to—

Q. Is there anything that triggered this?

The President. No, not at all, John [John Roberts, CBS News]. I feel great. This is a part of the ongoing—you know, it's a kind of part of the annual physical. And so I just decided to do it at this time; it fit in with my schedule. And I feel great—no signs, no symptoms.

The last time we did one of these colonoscopies, they found benign polyps, and they recommended that—I think it was 2 years ago, and they recommended they

take another look and see if there's anything in there.

Transfer of Powers to the Vice President

Q. Should we read anything into the fact that you are going to transfer the power, the length of time of this?

The President. No, not at all. It's just that I made the decision. We looked at the precedent. I'm the first President to have done so under this type of procedure and/or physical examination. I did so because we're at war, and I just want to be super—you know, super cautious.

And I informed the Vice President of this, and he's fully prepared to—standing by. He'll realize he's not going to be President that long. [*Laughter*]

Q. Is he back in Washington, sir?

The President. He is. Yes, he is.

Q. What time will you be doing this tomorrow?

The President. Well, the time is—you know, I really don't want to put out a time, and I hope you understand why.

Q. Where's the Vice President, here?

The President. He'll be—I'm not sure where he'll be.

Press Secretary Ari Fleischer. We'll hold a briefing. We'll fill you in.

The President. Yes, I need to find out where he's—

President's Health

Q. Any family history of colon cancer?

The President. Let's see, not really. Well, my brother—yes, I had a brother who had colitis, and so there's some history there.

I do recommend and urge that people take—get these precautionary tests and take a look. I had my first “scope,” as we say

in the business, I think maybe 5 or 6 years ago. They discovered polyps for the first time. And it gets your attention a little bit. Fortunately, they were benign. And I think it's important to continue to get good checkups, and that's what this is about.

So anyway, I'm glad to be able to share that with you. [*Laughter*] Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Statement on Signing the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act of 2002 *June 28, 2002*

I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 327, the "Small Business Paperwork Relief Act of 2002." This legislation will help achieve an important objective of my Administration to reduce the cost and burden on small businesses of government paperwork and increase the resources available to small businesses to create jobs and economic growth.

Section 3 of the bill creates a new section 3520 in title 44 of the United States Code to create an interagency task force on information collection and dissemination to help the heads of departments and agencies reduce the government burden on small businesses. Section 3520 purports to require task force publication of differences in views among executive officers and transmittal of recommendations to congressional

committees. The executive branch shall construe section 3520 in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch, to protect the confidentiality of executive deliberations, and to recommend to the consideration of the Congress such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
June 28, 2002.

NOTE: H.R. 327, approved June 28, was assigned Public Law No. 107-198. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Message on the Observance of Independence Day, 2002 *June 28, 2002*

Each year on Independence Day, Americans honor and celebrate the courageous action that our Nation's Founders took on July 4, 1776—the signing of the Declaration of Independence. With that brave and profound decision, the Founders demonstrated their love for liberty and proved that they were willing to fight and die for freedom. As we honor our Founders' bold vision on this first observance of Independence Day since September 11, Americans

possess a greater national unity and a deeper appreciation of the things that matter most in our lives—our faith, our love for family and friends, and our freedom.

In this new era, Americans share a renewed appreciation for the ideals that make our country strong. Our fine service men and women are fighting and winning the war on terror. They deserve the gratitude of all people who cherish freedom.