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Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic
September 18, 2002

President Bush. Mr. President, welcome to the Oval Office. Are you going to interpret? We're so glad you are here. It's my honor to welcome a truly remarkable person, a man who symbolizes courage and determination, and a man who loves freedom.

Mr. President, you are a unique person who has helped change the world. I am proud to call you friend, and my Nation is proud to call the Czech Republic friend as well. I look forward to our discussion about important issues today, and I also look forward to having a dinner tonight.

So, welcome. Welcome to our capital, and welcome to the Oval Office.

The President is going to say some remarks here.

President Havel. I would like to thank Mr. President for his kind words on my address. I'm very moved. I thank you for your hospitality, for the time which Laura Bush and you made for us. And I hope we shall have important and interesting discussions about the future of human rights and about human security.

I would like, publicly, to thank you for your solidarity and your support during terrible floods which were in my country. I would like to assure you that the Czech Republic is and will remain good friend of the United States, good ally. I hope that the next step will be done in the summit of NATO, which will be in Prague, which is for us a big honor.

I think that now it will be important if NATO will able to identify itself, to find its new identity in this very changed world. And especially now, after 11th of September, I think there is a lot of new kind of evil in this world, and it is necessary to face this evil and to face all who support it.

Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:12 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks on Preventive Cancer Screenings
September 18, 2002

The President. Thank you for coming. Please be seated. Gosh, thanks for the warm welcome. Welcome to the White House. I'm glad you're here.

The fight against cancer has seen major victories and is on the verge of major breakthroughs. It's important for Americans to understand. Medical science is helping cancer victims survive and helping survivors lead better lives. With exercise, nutrition, and changed behavior, we can reduce the chances of developing cancer. With well-funded research, we are pushing toward new cancer therapies and new cancer cures. The commitment of this Nation is clear: We will win the fight against cancer.

I appreciate our Secretary of Health and Human Services, Tommy Thompson, for being here and being on the leading edge of this fight. He is a general in the war against cancer. I want to thank our Secretary of Agriculture, Ann Veneman, who is with us today. Thank you for coming, Annie.

I appreciate the Members of the United States Congress who are here today. Two fine Senators, Senators Gregg and Brownback, of New Hampshire and Kansas, respectively—thank you all for coming—three Members from the House of Representatives: Deborah Pryce, Roger Wicker, and Sue Myrick. We're honored you all are here. Thanks for coming.

I'm honored that Andy von Eschenbach is here, who is the Director of the National Cancer Institute. Andy, thanks for coming—my fellow Texan. [*Laughter*] I appreciate the Director of the National Institutes of Health, Elias Zerhouni, is here. Elias, thanks for coming. The Surgeon General is here, Rich Carmona. Rich, I appreciate you being here. Julie Gerberding, who is the Director of the Centers for Disease Control, is with us as well. Good to meet you.

I'm honored to be on the stage with some courageous Americans, survivors of cancer: Paige Brown, Trischa Goldman, Jamal Rasheed, Cynthia Rubin, Matthew Skowronski, and, of course, Lance Armstrong. Thank you all for coming. I appreciate you being here.

Our progress against cancer is dramatic, and it's improving. We know that focused and sustained efforts can make a huge difference, because we have seen survival rates rise. Lance Armstrong's inspiring career is striking proof that testicular cancer survivors can go on to lead extraordinary lives. Thanks to the advances in science, 5-year survival rates for testicular cancer have reached an amazing 95 percent. That's progress.

Overall, more than 60 percent of the Americans diagnosed with cancer today can expect to be alive in 5 years. The survival rate for children after 10 years is approaching 70 percent. Today, 8.9 million Americans are cancer survivors. And research and new technology offer hope, offer a lot of hope that this number will continue to grow significantly. Every life, every name, is a triumph of medicine and a triumph of hope.

Given the statistics, the good news about cancer survivors also presents a real challenge to our country. Cancer survivors need high-quality followup care to detect early signs of recurrence and to treat other problems that come from the illness and its treatment. For example, many childhood cancer survivors do not receive any followup care after being treated and cured. Because cancer treatments can harm growing tissues, children are particularly vulnerable to recurrences and complications.

The National Cancer Institute, under Andy's lead, is committed to improving the long-term care for all survivors of cancer and especially for our children. NCI-funded scientists are exploring new ways to enhance high-quality, followup care.

We must also accelerate our progress against cancer itself. Despite all our gains, the disease continues to take a terrible toll on our country. Despite all the progress, there are some startling statistics that break my heart. More than 1,500 Americans die from cancer every day. Three out of every four American families will have at least one family member diagnosed with cancer. Scientists, health care providers, and public health professionals are working tirelessly to find cures for this disease, and they need our full—full support.

My 2003 budget would increase funding for cancer research by $629 million, for a total investment in cancer research throughout the National Institutes of Health of more than $5 billion. In order to win the war against cancer, we must fund the war against cancer. And I appreciate the Members of Congress here, who are committed to making sure this budget gets—gets enacted, soon. [*Laughter*]

Prevention is critical. And we're just beginning to make progress on cancer prevention. There are smart choices all Americans can make to reduce our chances of disease, choices we're promoting in our

HealthierUS Initiative. Even modest improvements in diet, in fitness, and behavior can help prevent many serious health problems, including cancer.

There's a growing body of evidence that a diet rich in fruits and vegetables reduces the risk of cancer and other chronic diseases. In fact, it's been estimated that dietary changes could reduce cancer deaths in the United States by a third. I'm going to start eating broccoli. [*Laughter*] I want to be a part of the third. [*Laughter*]

Regular exercise is another way to prevent illness and add years to your life. Last June, I signed an Executive order directing Federal agencies to work together to develop new policies to promote fitness. I reconstituted the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. I named Lynn Swann to head the Council. Exercise is a really important part of my life, and I urge all Americans to make it an important part of your life as well.

Of course, when it comes to behavior, there are healthy choices we can all make—like, don't smoke—in addition to a nutritious diet, regular exercise, and smart choices. Preventative health screenings can also help save lives. They can detect many forms of cancer at earlier, less dangerous stages, allowing doctors to defeat a cancer before it spreads.

Last month, Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman learned that she has breast cancer. This is one of the hardest things a woman can hear from her doctor and one of the toughest challenges any family will face, including the White House family. Fortunately, Secretary Veneman's cancer was diagnosed at a very early and curable stage. The good news is, her doctors expect her to enjoy a full recovery.

I checked with her in the Oval Office before coming over here, just to make sure she's going to show up for work. [*Laughter*] The good news for me is, she is going to carry out her responsibilities during her treatment. I appreciate her courage. I'm really proud of her. Our prayers are with her. I'm proud of the example she sets. She is—I knew I picked an extraordinary person when I named her to run—the Secretary of Agriculture. I didn't realize I was going to pick an heroic figure as well, an example for many people, to understand the need to—the need to get a mammogram, the need to take care of yourself, the need to screen early, the need to understand that we can stop cancer in its tracks if we all take wise moves. And so, Ann, thank you for your example.

I've tried to do the same thing myself. Earlier this year, to detect whether or not I could be infected with colorectal cancer, I had a screening. Turns out everything the President does is in the public view. [*Laughter*]

Screenings can save lives, and that's important. None of us are immune. All of us can be wise about how we take advantage of technologies. I want not only to make Americans aware of screenings, but scientists are now actively investigating new ways to make screenings better, so we can detect cancer earlier.

For example, again Andy's outfit, the National Cancer Institute, is launching a new clinical trial to study the most effective ways to detect lung cancer. Scientists have also developed promising new tests that analyses a single drop of blood to detect ovarian cancer in its earliest stages, even before symptoms develop. Many women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer too late, because the symptoms can easily be mistaken for other conditions. This new discovery brings great hope, great hope, for overcoming this disease.

There are still many high medical hurdles that we're going to have to clear here in America. But for the first time in human history, we can say with certainty, the war on cancer is winnable. And this Nation will not quit until our victory is complete.

And now it's my pleasure to introduce a man who doesn't know the meaning of the word "quit." Just a few years ago, he

was diagnosed with cancer. He was weakened by chemotherapy treatments and told he had a 50-50 chance of surviving. But he's done more than survive. As anybody who knows anything about sports knows, he's triumphed. His story, from cancer diagnosis to his fourth straight victory in the Tour de France, is one of the great human dramas in sports history.

And today—he asked me not to say it, so I'm going to say it anyway—[*laughter*]—is his 31st birthday. And now, it's my honor to present to you a son of Texas, a great American, a wonderful champ, Lance Armstrong.

[*At this point, Lance Armstrong made brief remarks.*]

The President. Appreciate you, Lance.

Again, thank you all for coming. We'll all be celebrating Lance's birthday in the State Dining Room here at the end of the hall. He made a little cake for you. He looks forward to you singing "Happy Birthday" to him. [*Laughter*]

In the meantime, many in this room are involved in this war. I want to thank you for your efforts, thank you for your love for your fellow Americans.

May God bless you all, and may God bless America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Mr. Armstrong. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on Signing the John F. Kennedy Center Plaza Authorization Act of 2002

September 18, 2002

Today I have signed into law H.R. 5012, an Act to amend the John F. Kennedy Center Act, authorizing a construction project to improve, among other things, pedestrian, vehicular, and bicycle access to the Kennedy Center.

As added by H.R. 5012, however, section 12(b)(5) purports to make the Secretary of Transportation's (Secretary) entry into contracts "[s]ubject to the approval of the Board." Because the membership of the Board of Trustees of the Kennedy Center (Board) by law includes Members of Congress, the Board cannot constitutionally exercise executive power, such as the power to approve the exercise of contracting authority by the head of an executive department. The exercise of such power by Members of Congress would violate the separation of powers embodied in our Constitution.

It is not evident that the Congress would have withheld contracting authority from the Secretary absent the invalid Board approval requirement. Therefore the executive branch shall treat the Board approval requirement as severable from the remainder of section 12(b)(5), leaving fully operative the contracting authority granted to the Secretary. As a matter of comity, the Secretary shall consult the Board as appropriate in relation to the Secretary's exercise of the authority to enter into contracts under section 12(b)(5).

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

September 18, 2002.

NOTE: H.R. 5012, approved September 18, was assigned Public Law No. 107–224.