

networks. These networks link urban medical centers, staffed by specialist physicians and nurses, with rural clinics where HIV tests can be performed and medications distributed.

And because so much of the health care in sub-Saharan Africa is provided by facilities associated with churches and religious orders, we must ensure that the legislation provides the greatest opportunity for faith-based and community organizations to fully participate in helping a neighbor in need.

Our experts believe that the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief will, in this decade, prevent 7 million new HIV infections, treat at least 2 million people with life-extending drugs, and provide humane care for millions of people suffering from AIDS and, as importantly, for children orphaned by AIDS.

Confronting the threat of AIDS is important work, and it is urgent work. It is a moral imperative for our great Nation. In the 3 months since I announced the Emergency Plan, an estimated 760,000 people have died from AIDS, 1.2 million people have been infected, more than 175,000 babies have been born with the virus. Time is not on our side.

So I ask Congress to move forward with speed and seriousness this crisis requires. But Africa, the Caribbean, and the United States cannot succeed by ourselves. I urge all nations and will continue to urge all nations to join with us in this great effort.

Fighting AIDS on a global scale is a massive and complicated undertaking. Yet, this cause is rooted in the simplest of moral duties. When we see this kind of preventable suffering, when we see a plague leaving graves and orphans across a continent, we must act. When we see the wounded traveler on the road to Jericho, we will not—America will not pass to the other side of the road.

Thank you all. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:08 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Representatives Henry J. Hyde of Illinois and Tom Lantos of California; President Yoweri Kugata Museveni and Ambassador to the U.S. Edith Grace Ssemplala of Uganda; and Jean W. Pape, director, Haitian Study Group on Kaposi's Sarcoma and Opportunistic Infections (GHESKIO).

Statement on Senate Confirmation of Jeffrey S. Sutton as a United States Court of Appeals Circuit Judge *April 29, 2003*

I commend the Senate for confirming Jeffrey Sutton to be a Judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. Mr. Sutton is a man of great integrity, intellect, and experience, and has bipartisan support. He has served the people of Ohio with distinction, including as the State's solicitor. He graduated first in his class from Ohio State University College of Law. He is known as one of the premier appellate lawyers in America, having argued numerous cases before the Supreme Court of the

United States, and State and Federal appeals courts. He will be an outstanding Court of Appeals Judge and will serve the American people well.

All judicial nominees should receive a timely up-or-down vote in the Senate. Mr. Sutton was nominated on May 9, 2001, and waited more than 23 months for this vote. Five of the 11 nominees I submitted to the Senate on May 9, 2001, still have not received votes. Some in the Senate are now engaging in unprecedented filibusters to

prevent votes on two outstanding circuit nominees I submitted on May 9, 2001, Miguel Estrada and Priscilla Owen.

The delays in the Senate confirmation process deter good people from seeking to serve on the bench and create a vacancy crisis in the Federal courts that harms the

American people. As I have said before, I call on the Senate to perform its Constitutional responsibility to hold timely up-or-down votes on all judicial nominees, no matter who is President or which party controls the Senate.

Remarks Honoring the National Teacher of the Year April 30, 2003

The President. Please be seated. Welcome to the First Lady's Garden. It's an appropriate place to honor some of our Nation's finest citizens. After all, the First Lady was and is a teacher, and I'm glad she said yes. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank the teachers, who have traveled from all over the country, for being here today. Thank you for your dedication. Thank you for your hard and rewarding work. The 54 teachers we honor today deserve the respect and the gratitude of our entire Nation. This is our way of thanking you all for your dedication, your service, and your love. Welcome to Washington.

I want to thank the Secretary of Education for joining us up here. When I picked the Secretary of Education, I wanted somebody who knew something about public education. I wasn't interested in a theorist. I was interested in finding a hands-on person. I knew Rod Paige when I was the Governor of the State of Texas, and he was the superintendent of the Houston Independent School District. He set high standards for every child in that district. He worked hard with teachers to achieve those standards. I really want to thank Rod for the job he did in Texas and, as importantly, for the job he's doing for America. Mr. Secretary, welcome.

We've got some fine Members of the United States Congress with us today: from the State of Georgia, Senator Miller and

Senator Saxby Chambliss—thank you, Zell and Saxby, for coming; from the State of North Dakota, Senator Dorgan and Senator Conrad—I'm honored to see both of you all; Senator Jeff Sessions and Senator Richard Shelby from the State of Alabama. It turns out that some of the finalists are from these States. [*Laughter*] And these Senators and Members of the House are here to join with Laura and me in thanking you all for your hard work. From the House of Representatives: Artur Davis from the State of Alabama; Mac Collins from the State of Georgia; Richard Burr from the State of North Carolina; Earl Pomeroy from the State of North Dakota; and Spencer Bachus, who happens to be the Congressman of the particular lady standing up next to me. Thank you all for coming. Thank you for your service and your dedication to education.

I do want to congratulate the National Teacher of the Year finalists: Lorraine Johnson of Newnan, Georgia; Melissa Bartlett of Statesville, North Carolina; Jennifer Montgomery of Bismarck, North Dakota; and Betsy Rogers. I'm going to have a little more to say about her later. I'm not going to tell you who won yet—[*laughter*]—but they might have figured it out. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Tom Houlihan, who is the executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers. I appreciate your service so very much. And I want to