

Statement on Medical Liability Reform Legislation May 8, 2006

I am disappointed that the Senate has yet again failed to pass real medical liability reform legislation. Unwilling to take on their trial lawyer supporters, the Democrats led this effort to block these much-needed reforms.

Junk lawsuits are driving too many good doctors out of medicine. Women in nearly 1,500 counties are without a single ob-gyn, and frivolous and abusive lawsuits are encouraging the use of defensive medicine,

which imposes substantial and unnecessary costs on all Americans.

This is a national problem that deserves a national solution. I have called on Congress to pass responsible medical liability reforms, and the House of Representatives has acted. It is time for the Senate to put the needs of the American people ahead of the interests of trial lawyers and pass meaningful medical liability reform legislation.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency Blocking Property of Certain Persons and Prohibiting the Export of Certain Goods to Syria May 8, 2006

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice, stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004, and expanded in scope in Executive Order 13399 of April 25, 2006, authorizing the blocking of property of certain persons and prohibiting the exportation and reexportation of certain goods to Syria, is to continue in effect beyond May 11, 2006. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on May 10, 2005 (70 *FR* 24697).

The actions of the Government of Syria in supporting terrorism, interfering in Leb-

anon, pursuing weapons of mass destruction and missile programs, and undermining United States and international efforts with respect to the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq, pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue in effect the national emergency authorizing the blocking of property of certain persons and prohibiting the exportation and reexportation of certain goods to Syria and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
May 8, 2006.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks to Reporters in Coconut Creek, Florida May 9, 2006

The President. I want to thank you all for joining us. I'm proud to be here with Secretary Leavitt. We're traveling the country reminding people that there's a fantastic opportunity for our seniors, and that is, Medicare now offers a prescription drug benefit that will save people a lot of money.

We just visited with some of our citizens inside there, and they're talking about significant savings. And that's what we want; we want our seniors to be able to have modern medicine. So far a lot of seniors have signed up. It's coming down the stretch toward the May 15th deadline; we want everybody to sign up. We want people to understand that they're going to save a lot of money when it comes to prescription drugs.

And I appreciate Secretary Leavitt's hard work. One of the things that our seniors have got to understand, that if you qualify for extra help in the program, if you're a low-income senior that qualifies for extra help, the May 15th deadline doesn't apply to you; you'll have time to take a look—we want everybody signing up. And if you're a low-income senior, you get—the Government pays about 95 percent or more of your prescription drug benefit. So it's worthwhile for people to look.

I want to thank groups like the AARP, NAACP, many in the faith community, community-based groups, all for working hard to educate seniors as to what's available. This is a good deal for America's seniors, and I'm proud to have signed a law to modernize Medicare, and I'm proud to be working with Michael.

I also want to thank Congressman Foley and Congressman Clay Shaw for joining us. They're strong backers of Medicare reform. They were informing me that a lot of their citizens have signed up. In south Florida, people are taking advantage of this program. And I strongly urge people to take a look and see what's available.

[At this point, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services Michael O. Leavitt made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you all for joining us. Thank you all very much, I appreciate it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:53 a.m. at Broward Community College. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Leavitt.

Remarks on the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit and a Question-and-Answer Session in Sun City Center, Florida May 9, 2006

The President. Thanks for coming. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's great to be here in Sun City Center. Brother Jeb said, "If you want to come to a really good place, come here." First of all, I think it's a pretty neat deal when you get introduced by your brother, par-

ticularly since he's such a good Governor. We both share the same political adviser—Mom. [Laughter] I don't know if Mother is still telling you what to do, Jeb, but she's certainly telling me what to do all the time. [Laughter]