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In the days and weeks ahead, we will intensify our cooperation with Russian authorities to help prevent terrorist acts. The struggle against terrorism is a long and difficult road, but we must not lose our resolve. America stands ready to work with Russia to protect our citizens from this common threat.

NOTE: In this statement, the President referred to President Boris Yeltsin and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin of Russia.

Statement on the Common Ground Partnerships Initiative

September 17, 1999

Today, as we celebrate Citizenship Day and Constitution Week, thousands of individuals in naturalization ceremonies across America are pledging their allegiance to the United States and to the ideals that undergird our Nation. Like generations of immigrants past, they are driven by a dream—and to achieve that dream, they seek to learn the ways of this land. I believe we can help these new citizens become full participants in American society. That is why my administration has proposed the creation of the Common Ground Partnerships, an innovative initiative that would combine expanded English language instruction with education in civics and life skills. This initiative, which my FY 2000 budget funds at $70 million, will help ensure that those who become Americans learn not only the words of the citizenship oath but also the broader language of our civic life. I hope that Members of Congress from both parties will recognize the power of this important initiative to build a stronger American community.

Statement on Patients' Bill of Rights Legislation

September 17, 1999

I am pleased that the House of Representatives will have an opportunity in just a few weeks to vote on a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights. This will, at long last, give Members of Congress an opportunity to put patients' interests ahead of the special interests.

A bipartisan majority of the House has already expressed support for the Norwood-Dingell proposal, a plan that would provide for an enforceable set of meaningful patient protections that would be extended to all Americans in all health plans. I am confident that the Norwood-Dingell Patients' Bill of Rights will be adopted, if the House leadership permits a fair process for debating and voting on this important issue.

Message on the Observance of Yom Kippur, 1999

September 17, 1999

I am pleased to send warm greetings to all those observing Yom Kippur.

On this most solemn of holy days, Jews across our nation and around the world prepare for the new year through fasting, prayer, and quiet reflection. Examining their thoughts, words, and deeds of the past year, they strive to acknowledge and learn from their transgressions, seek forgiveness from those whom they may have offended, and ask for God's mercy.

This Day of Atonement can offer a powerful lesson to people of all faiths about the true spirit of reconciliation and the unconditional love of God. It can teach us not only to face our own failures, but also to love and forgive one another as God loves and forgives us. As the Jewish people set aside this time to repair their relationships and renew their souls, let us all vow to work together to heal divisions, promote tolerance and understanding, and share the blessings of peace in the year to come.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes to all for a meaningful Yom Kippur.

Bill Clinton

Proclamation 7223—Ovarian Cancer Awareness Week, 1999

September 17, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Ovarian cancer is a devastating disease that takes the lives of thousands of women in our