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a way to help, to become involved with making sure America's Promise is, in fact,—reaches it's hope all throughout our society. For those of you who are looking for a way to help our country, call America's Promise; say you want to help. And I can assure you we'll sign you up.

It's now my honor to sign a resolution, like other Presidents have done.

God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:25 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Gov. Marc Racicot of Montana, chairman of the board, Peter A. Gallagher, president and chief executive officer, Michelle Engler, board member, and Jackie Joyner-Kersee, spokesperson, America's Promise; Alma Powell, wife of Secretary of State Colin L. Powell; and Ms. Joyner-Kersee's husband, Bobby Kersee. Following his remarks, the President signed the Declaration to Fulfill the Promise of America.

Remarks at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital and an Exchange With Reporters in Fairfax, Virginia

July 9, 2001

Patients' Bill of Rights

The President. Thank you all for coming. Knox, thank you very much for setting up the meeting with Knox and hospital officials, nurses, former patients. We had a great discussion about the need for our Nation to pass legislation with America's patients in mind, that the whole core of a good bill recognizes that patients ought to have direct access to specialists, such as Dr. Berry, an ob-gyn—cancer specialists, that patients ought to have the capacity to take complaints to an independent review organization staffed by doctors and medical professionals.

We're making good progress. There is a lot of agreement on a bill that has—bills moving their way through the House of Representatives right now.

But I want a bill to sign that does not run the cost of premiums up or health care up as a result of excessive lawsuits. I want a bill that honors patients, not trial lawyers, a bill that makes it easier for docs to do their job, as opposed to a bill that encourage excessive litigation.

I want to, again, thank you for the chance to visit.

Dr. Berry, you might want to say a few things.

[*At this point, Dr. David B. Berry made brief remarks.*]

The President. Okay, thank you all.

Q. Mr. President, any decisions on stem cell——

Q. What did you hear from the patients——

Q. What did the patients——

The President. The patients just want to make sure they've got access to specialists, and they, too, like the idea of having an independent review organization where they can take their complaints, where they can solve problems before it ends up in a court of law.

There are some people up there on the Hill that are interested in fostering excessive litigation, which is not good for patients. I think Americans understand that.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:18 p.m. in the boardroom following discussions in the hospital. In his remarks, he referred to J. Knox Singleton, chief executive officer, Inova Health System. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Videotape Remarks to the NAACP Convention

July 9, 2001

Thank you very much. I'm honored to be able to send my greetings to you for the 92d annual convention of the NAACP.

Last year I joined you in person at your convention in Baltimore. I said that there is no denying the truth that racism, despite all our progress, still exists, and that there's no escaping the reality that the party of Lincoln has not always carried the mantle of Lincoln. I said that recognizing and confronting our history is important but transcending our history is essential.

A year has passed since I gave that speech, and nearly 6 months have passed since I became the President. We must continue our work to ensure that my party keeps faith with the memory of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass.