

Events

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

June 22, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF

FROM: Bruce Reed  
Elena Kagan

SUBJECT: Summer Announcements and Events

Probs + Costs

Listed below are ideas for announcements and events that the President could do this summer.

Health

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**Release New Executive Order Authorizing OPM to Terminate FEHBP Insurance Plans That Are Out of Compliance with Kennedy-Kassebaum Law.** This policy would strengthen enforcement of the Kennedy-Kassebaum law by allowing the Federal Employees' Health Benefits Plan (FEHBP) to take action against any insurer that discriminates against sicker patients -- including by terminating the insurance plan. Although we have not seen many reports of discrimination recently, advocates would characterize this action as reducing the likelihood of future abuses.

Find 3 victims  
diabetic comm.

Discuss After China

**Release New HHS Report on Long-Term Care and Announce Policy Initiative(s).** A new report from HHS shows that millions of American families care for chronically ill elderly relatives and friends, and that this care places a significant strain on families. The President could announce an initiative to encourage private long-term care insurance by offering it through the FEHBP and/or counseling Medicare beneficiaries to consider private insurance. In addition, if we are willing to consider proposals with budgetary effects, we could announce a new respite care tax credit, which the NEC is now actively considering.

**Approve the 25th State Children's Health Insurance Program.** As of today, HHS has approved the CHIP plans of 20 states, which should cover about 2.5 million children when fully implemented; we expect to reach the half-way mark by approving the 25th CHIP plan early next month. We could use this occasion to release another progress report and hold an event featuring families already helped by the program and a bipartisan group of governors.

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**Enhance Welfare-to-Work Commitment by Giving States Option to Maintain Health Insurance for Working Adults.** We may be able to issue a new HHS regulation that would allow more states to provide Medicaid coverage to more low-income two-parent families. (Current federal law, applicable in all states without pre-welfare law waivers on this subject, limits Medicaid to only those two-parent families in which the parents work less than 100 hours

per month.) States believe that this regulation would enhance welfare-to-work efforts and encourage two-parent families. The regulation, however, has cost implications, and we are currently discussing with OMB whether an offset is needed.

**Announce Policies for People with Disabilities.** We have been working on administrative and legislative policies to enable people with disabilities to (1) reside in their communities, rather than institutions, and (2) return to work activities. We could announce these actions on July 26, the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (but note: the Vice President has tentatively agreed to unveil a wheelchair at the FDR Memorial ~~that day~~). July 3

### Education

**Announce New Legislation, With Offsets, to Reduce Class Size.** Senator Murray intends to introduce legislation with as many as 20 co-sponsors to implement the President's class size initiative. DPC and OMB are working with Murray's staff on potential offsets for the legislation. The President indicated interest in participating in the announcement of this legislation.

**Announce New Bilingual Education Plan.** The President could transmit (or announce that he will transmit next session) legislation to reform the federal bilingual program, including by requiring school districts to establish a goal of moving all Limited English Proficient students into regular English language classes within three years. At the same time, he could (1) propose ways to strengthen teaching for LEP students (e.g., by recruitment and training initiatives); (2) issue a directive to the Secretary of Education to report on best practices of teaching English to LEP students, as well as to conduct or support further research in this area; (3) support community-based initiatives that supplement school programs for LEP students; and (4) propose ways of strengthening foreign language education for English-speaking students. Some of these proposals could have budgetary implications.

**Announce First Grants of Comprehensive School Reform (Obey/Porter) Program.** The Education Department will be ready in mid-June to announce the first grants under the new Comprehensive School Reform program. Seven states (Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin) will receive approximately \$33 million, enough to support reform in up to 650 schools. Grants of about \$18 million to another seven states will be ready in early July.

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**Launch the Education Department's Summer Reading Initiative.** Seventy partnerships across the country will launch summer reading programs aimed at young children next month. The President could help to kick off these programs, while calling on Congress again to enact his America Reads initiative.

### Crime and Drugs

**Announce Support for Child Access Prevention Legislation, Issue Child-Proof Gun**

**Challenge, and Issue Regulation on New Gun Signs.** The President could (1) support child access prevention legislation (both Durbin and McCarthy have bills) that would hold adults liable if they give children easy access to guns; (2) challenge industry to get a child-proof gun (*i.e.*, a gun that can be shot only by authorized adults) on the market by the year 2000; and/or (3) issue a Treasury Department regulation (responding to a presidential directive) requiring gun dealers to post signs warning gun purchasers about their responsibility to keep guns away from children.

**Report on Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative and Press for Congress to Fund Our Budget Request.** The second anniversary of the President's gun tracing initiative falls in July, and we may have a report by then on the continued success of this program. (If not, the report will be ready later in the summer.) Our budget asked for \$28 million to expand this initiative, which the House appropriations subcommittee fully funded last week. An event could keep up the pressure for full funding of this initiative.



**Announce Federal Drug Strike Force for Chicago and Support for Chicago's Anti-Gang Ordinance.** DOJ is prepared to announce that it will dedicate some 300 federal agents and 20 prosecutors to form a drug strike force in Chicago. We have promised Mayor Daley that we will make this announcement soon. At the same time, we could comment on the brief we just filed in the Supreme Court supporting Chicago's anti-gang ordinance.

**Announce New Demonstration Project to Fund Faith-Based Anti-Crime Programs.** DOJ is now considering how to put together a demonstration project to fund faith-based anti-crime programs, such as the one profiled recently in Newsweek. We will have to work through some constitutional concerns, but we should be ready to go on this new effort by mid-summer.

**Announce New COPS Grants.** We will have several opportunities this summer to announce new cop grants, including grants targeted to combating methamphetamine use and extensions of prior grants (*i.e.*, a fourth year of funding) in small cities. We should try to time such an announcement to coincide with new crime statistics.

**COPS in Schools.** By the end of the summer, the Departments of Justice and Education should be ready to (1) offer recommendations to the President for getting more police to work with schools (in response to the President's directive last week); (2) release COPS grants to provide additional law enforcement assistance in schools; (3) hold a conference on how law enforcement officers can help to keep schools safe; and (4) issue a report on the success of the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program. We should try to package these announcements together and have the President participate.

**Launch Nationwide Phase of Our Anti-Drug Media Campaign.** The President can announce the national roll-out of the \$195 million media campaign in July. ONDCP will buy a "roadblock" on network TV that night, unveil new ads, and host local events in scores of participating cities.

**Release Drug Court Grants.** The President could announce the latest drug court grants from DOJ and highlight the success of this program. (A recent study showed some very good results.) The President has indicated interest in participating in such an event, but we might want to combine it the launch of anti-drug media campaign (above).

Atlanta

**Release Results of Household Survey.** The Household Survey -- one of two major drug surveys on teen drug use -- should be out by August. Last year's survey was the first to indicate a dip in teenage drug use, and this year's is likely to show the same. The Survey also will contain new data on youth tobacco use.

**Release Stalking Report and Associated Policies.** DOJ is preparing a report showing that about eight million women in this country report having been stalked. We are working with DOJ on policy recommendations to go with this report, but have yet determined their exact content.

Tobacco

\* FDA results

**Bring Medicare Suits Against Tobacco Companies?** We and the Counsel's Office will advise the President within the next couple of weeks on whether the federal government should bring suit against the tobacco companies for losses to the Medicare program caused by tobacco-related disease. If the President chooses to go ahead with these suits, he can direct the Attorney General to prepare the suit for filing. (There is little chance that the suit will actually be ready to file this summer.)

**Prevent Filmmakers from Using Federal Facilities for Films that Contain Youth Smoking.** We are exploring whether agencies that oversee federal facilities (e.g., DOD, the Forest Service) can require, as a condition of granting a permit to film a movie on those facilities, that the movie not show or glamorize youth smoking. We will know within a week or so whether we can proceed with this idea.

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**Release Report on Effects of Price Increases on Youth Smoking.** We are ready to release a Treasury Department report showing how price increases can dramatically reduce youth smoking. This report should be useful to show the absurdity of the House Republicans' "no-money" approach to this problem. When they release that bill, we will have Treasury (or commission an independent expert) to do a report on the likely effects of the bill on youth smoking.

**Release Results of Household Survey.** As discussed above.

Welfare-to-Work

**Release Report Showing the Increase in the Proportion of Welfare Recipients Going to Work.** Following on the GAO report last week, HHS is scheduled to report to Congress on the increase in work among welfare recipients. The report should have some new data, although it

also will collate previously released figures. Sometime this summer, HHS also will receive information from the states on whether they are meeting the welfare law's work participation rates. This information should generate a fair bit of interest, but it is not yet clear whether the news will be good.

**Endorse Individual Development Account Bill.** The President has indicated interest in doing an event to endorse and highlight the Coats-Harkin IDA legislation. This bill would establish a four-year, \$100 million demonstration program under which state, local, and nonprofit entities would match money deposited into IDAs by low-income families. We can try to time this event to coincide with some congressional action (e.g., Senate committee mark-up) on the bill.

### Food Safety

**Call for Congress to Fund Our Food Safety Initiative and Pass Legislation Giving FDA and USDA More Enforcement Authority.** The relevant House and Senate subcommittees allocated almost no funds to our food safety initiative; at the same time, our proposals to give USDA additional recall authority and give FDA additional authority over imported foods are languishing. The President could do an event with members of Congress and food safety advocates urging Congress to act on these measures. (Summer is the time when people think most about these issues.)

### Veterans

**Announce Coordinated Effort to Assist Homeless Veterans.** We have been working with the Veterans' Administration on a plan to help the 250,000 homeless veterans in this country. The plan would involve outreach efforts, substance abuse treatment, and mental health care, in addition to housing assistance. The President could direct the VA to come back to him with a battle plan or could himself announce the program, at an annual cost of about \$30 million.

### Rural Issues

**Deliver Speech on Rural Issues.** DPC, NEC, and USDA have prepared a rural agenda for a speech sometime this summer. The agenda includes: (1) the use of new technologies, such as distance learning and telemedicine, to benefit rural areas; (2) the enforcement of antitrust laws in agricultural-related industries; (3) the expansion of programs that help farmers manage risk; (4) the promotion of free trade; (5) the expansion of agricultural cooperatives; and (6) the renewal of the ethanol subsidy.