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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 22, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Bruce Reed
Elena Kagan

SUBJECT: DPC Weekly Report

1. Health -- Patients' Bill of Rights: You are tentatively scheduled to devote next week's radio address to patients' rights. You will call on Senator Lott to bring up patients' bill of rights legislation for a vote as soon as the Senate returns from recess. (Just prior to the radio address, we will release your response to Senator Lott's recent letter on patients' rights legislation, in which you will call attention to the shortcomings of the Republican proposal, but continue to urge bipartisan cooperation.) You also will continue your effort to protect patients rights through executive action, by announcing the release of a new Department of Labor regulation that will require all self-insured health plans -- which cover a total of 50 million Americans -- to have a strong internal appeals process for enrollees. We expect both employer and consumer advocates to support this regulation.

2. Crime -- COPS/School Safety Event: We have prepared a crime event for you to do in Boston in case you want to take a short break from your vacation. At the event, you would announce: (1) the release of an Early Warning Guide for youth violence, which you asked the Departments of Justice and Education to prepare after the Springfield, OR school shooting; (2) \$30 million for states to fund college scholarships for aspiring law enforcement officers through the Police Corps; and (3) roughly \$80 million for more than 1,000 communities to hire and retain police officers. Education and Justice will send out over 200,000 copies of the Early Warning Guide to schools, and will post the full text on their websites. The guide provides teachers and principals with information on how to identify and respond to early warning signs of youth violence; it also provides a crisis response checklist in the event that violence does occur. The event program probably would include Mayor Menino (who could announce new, positive crime statistics) and Police Commissioner Evans. The program also could include a recent Police Corps graduate who became involved with the Corps because of his brother's gang-related death, and a citizen (yet to be identified) who could discuss the importance of communities and schools working with law enforcement.

3. Drugs -- Household Survey: HHS and ONDCP release on Friday the 1997 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse. The survey shows the following:

Overall Drug Use Flat -- The total number of Americans who are current drug users (or who used illicit drugs during the past 30 days) did not change significantly between

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 22, 1998

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
8-28-98

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

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Elena Kagan

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*Reed
Kagan
Sashnik
COP
T.D. & Alex*

*Copied
Reed
Kagan
Sashnik
COP*

1996 and 1997 (from 13 million to 13.9 million), and remains nearly 50 percent below its peak in 1979 (25 million).

Youth Drug Use Up -- The percentage of youth (12 to 17-year olds) who were current drug users increased from 9 percent in 1996 to 11.4 percent in 1997 -- reversing last year's drop from 10.9 percent in 1995. The rate was highest in 1979 (16.3 percent) and lowest in 1992 (5.3 percent).

Marijuana a Big Problem -- The prevalence of marijuana use among youth more than doubled from 1992 to 1997 and increased significantly last year, from 7.1 percent in 1996 to 9.4 percent in 1997. This rate also was highest in 1979 (14.2 percent).

Cocaine Use Stable -- The overall number of cocaine users did not change significantly in 1997 (declining from 1.75 million to 1.5 million), and remained well below its peak in 1985 (5.7 million).

Increasing Heroin Use -- The number of current heroin users has increased from 68,000 in 1992 to 325,000 in 1997. Heroin users, however, remain a relatively small percentage of the drug-using population (increasing from .1 percent in 1992 to .2 percent in 1997).

Alcohol/Tobacco Use Stable -- The overall number of Americans using alcohol and tobacco did not change significantly from 1996 to 1997. About 110 million Americans aged 12 and over were current users of alcohol, including 32 million binge drinkers (5 or more drinks on one occasion) and 11 million heavy drinkers (5 or more drinks at least 5 times a month). Eleven million current drinkers were between the ages of 12 and 20 years old, including 4.8 million binge drinkers and 2 million heavy drinkers. About sixty-four million Americans aged 12 and older reported smoking in the past 30 days in 1997. This number included 4.5 million youth between the ages of 12 and 20 years old -- about 20 percent of this population. Although the overall youth rates are similar to the 1996 estimates, the number of 12-13 year olds that smoked increased from 7.3 percent in 1996 to 9.7 percent in 1997.