

ORIGINAL

#3 | "Drugs"

REMARKS

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I WANT TO CONGRATULATE THE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF PRIVATE CITIZENS EVERYWHERE WHO ARE WORKING HARD TO GET DRUNK DRIVERS OFF AMERICA'S LOCAL STREETS AND HIGHWAYS.

SUCH GRASSROOTS EFFORTS SERVE TO REINFORCE THE WORK GOING ON AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL. ONE OF THESE, A NATIONAL INITIATIVE ON ALCOHOL ABUSE AND ALCOHOLISM, WAS LAUNCHED LAST NOVEMBER BY DR. OTIS R. BOWEN, SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

I WAS PRESENT WHEN SECRETARY BOWEN ANNOUNCED THAT DEPARTMENT-WIDE INITIATIVE AND I TOTALLY SUPPORT IT.

WE KNOW THAT DRUNK DRIVING IS THE DIRECT CAUSE OF FAR TOO MANY TRAGEDIES IN OUR HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS. I PERSONALLY HAVE HAD FRIENDS WHOSE CHILDREN WERE KILLED IN RANDOM DRUNK-DRIVING ACCIDENTS. AND, INDEED, IN ONE TERRIBLE INSTANCE, AN ENTIRE FAMILY OF FRIENDS WAS WIPED OUT BY A SINGLE DRUNK DRIVER.

THAT'S WHY, FOR THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, I HAVE BEEN LAYING PLANS FOR AN INITIATIVE THAT MY OFFICE MIGHT APPROPRIATELY TAKE TO SUPPORT EFFORTS BY CITIZENS' GROUPS TO BAN DRUNK DRIVERS FROM THE HIGHWAY.

BEGINNING IN MID-JUNE, I HOPE TO HAVE A PROFESSIONAL STAFF PERSON WORKING FULL-TIME ON SUCH AN INITIATIVE, SO THAT WE MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING IN HAND LATER THIS YEAR. WHATEVER SHAPE IT FINALLY TAKES, I WANT IT GOOD ENOUGH TO BE ON THE SURGEON GENERAL'S YEAR-ROUND AGENDA ... REGARDLESS OF WHO THE SURGEON GENERAL IS.

BUT I THINK WE MUST BE CLEAR ON ONE MAJOR POINT: WHEN THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, ACTING AT THE COMMUNITY AND STATE LEVELS, DECIDE THEY WANT TO GET DRUNK DRIVERS OFF OUR ROADS ... THAT'S WHEN IT WILL HAPPEN.

I HAVE NO DOUBT WHATSOEVER THAT LOCAL AND STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT, CRIMINAL JUSTICE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH PERSONNEL WILL GET THE JOB DONE -- ONCE THE PUBLIC TELLS THEM UNEQUIVOCALLY TO DO IT.

OUR CITIZENS KNOW THEY HAVE A PROBLEM. NOW THEY MUST SHOW  
THE WILL TO SOLVE IT. THIS EVENT TODAY IS CERTAINLY STRONG  
EVIDENCE THAT AMERICANS ARE DEVELOPING THE WILL TO FIGHT BACK  
AGAINST DRUNK DRIVERS --AND WIN.

THANK YOU.

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