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Ben Franklin Bill - Pennsylvania 10/9/92 [OA 8485]

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BEN FRANKLIN MEM. BILL-SIGNING \ 11:20 A.M.
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP, PA \ OCT. 9, 1992
O THANK YOU CURT. LET OFFER A SPECIAL

SALUTE TO THE FIRE-FIGHTER'S BEST FRIEND,
CONGRESSMAN CURT WELDON -- THE MAN
RESPONSIBLE FOR GETTING THIS IMPORTANT BILL
THROUGH THE CONGRESS. SEN. ARLEN SPECTER.
MEMBERS OF THE FIRE SERVICE COMMUNITY. FIRE
CHIEF JOHN GALLAGHER. GENE BIDOLI
[PRESIDENT, DELAWARE COUNTY FIREMAN'S
ASSOCIATION].

- 2 -

O IT IS AN HONOR TO BE HERE WITH ALL OF
YOU THIS MORNING. I HAVE A CONFESSION TO
MAKE... AS A KID, I ALWAYS WANTED TO BE A
FIRE-FIGHTER WHEN I GREW UP. IN FACT, LAST
WEEK, BARBARA CAUGHT ME SAWING A HOLE IN THE
FLOOR OF THE LINCOLN BEDROOM. I WAS GOING TO
BUILD A POLE TO SLIDE DOWN INTO THE OVAL
OFFICE. //

- 3 -

EVEN MILLIE IS UPSET ABOUT MY FIRE-FIGHTER ASPIRATIONS. THIS MORNING, SHE CAUGHT ME ON THE PHONE WITH "RENT-A-DALMATIAN". //

- 4 -

O I AM HERE TODAY TO SIGN THE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN NATIONAL MEMORIAL COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL AND FIRE SERVICE BILL OF RIGHTS ACT -- WHICH AUTHORIZES THE MINTING OF A MEDAL COMMEMORATING BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE AND THE AMERICAN FIRE SERVICE.

O THE ACTIVITIES FUNDED THROUGH THE SALE OF THE MEDAL WILL HELP TO CARRY OUT YOUR BILL OF RIGHTS. THE PROCEEDS WILL HELP PROMOTE EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS, AND GREATER PUBLIC AWARENESS AND SUPPORT OF THE MANY HAZARDS OF FIRE-FIGHTING AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE. THEY WILL ASSURE THAT SHOULD THE ULTIMATE TRAGEDY OCCUR -- YOUR LOVED ONES WILL BE TAKEN CARE OF.

O THE LIST OF BENEFITS FROM THIS MEDAL GOES ON AND ON. AND SO DOES THE COURAGE OF AMERICA'S FIRE FIGHTERS. I KNOW IT CAN BE "TOUCH-AND-GO" IN SOME OF THE CALLS YOU RESPOND TO / THE DANGER EVERY FIRE FIGHTER FACES WHEN ENTERING A BURNING BUILDING OR RESPONDING TO AN ACCIDENT. FOR YOUR BRAVERY AND UNFAILING DEDICATION, I SAY THIS FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART: THANK YOU.

- 7 -

O ALSO INCLUDED IN THIS ACT, IS THE FIRE SERVICE BILL OF RIGHTS. IT IS A TRIBUTE TO ALL OF YOU. IT ACKNOWLEDGES THE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS FIRE-FIGHTERS MAKE TO THEIR COMMUNITIES. BUT, MOST OF ALL, THE FIRE SERVICE BILL OF RIGHTS IS LONG-AWAITED AND MUCH-DESERVED RECOGNITION FOR ALL YOU DO FOR YOUR COUNTRY.

- 8 -

O AS SOME OF YOU MAY KNOW, TEDDY ROOSEVELT IS AMONG MY FAVORITE PRESIDENTS IN HISTORY. LET ME SHARE WITH YOU WHAT HIS FATHER SAID TO HIM ON THE EVE OF HIS 16TH BIRTHDAY. HE SAID, "~~ALL THAT GIVES ME MOST PLEASURE IN THE RETROSPECT IS CONNECTED WITH~~ OTHERS... WE ARE NOT PLACED HERE TO LIVE EXCLUSIVELY FOR OURSELVES."

O YOU SERVE NOT FOR YOURSELVES ALONE --
BUT FOR THE FAMILY CALLED AMERICA. ON BEHALF
OF THAT FAMILY, THANK YOU, AND MAY GOD BLESS
EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU: ALL OF YOU ARE
HEROES. MAY GOD BLESS THE GREAT STATE OF
PENNSYLVANIA, AND THIS MAGNIFICENT COUNTRY WE
LIVE IN -- THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
NOW, LET'S SIGN THAT ACT. ((SIGN ACT))

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Remarks on Signing the Benjamin Franklin National Memorial Commemorative Medal and Fire Service Bill of Rights Act in Springfield, Pennsylvania

October 12, 1992

Curt, thank you so very much. And I just can't tell you what this event means to me. I want to offer a special salute to Curt Weldon. He has got to be, when you look at the whole Nation, the firefighter's, the emergency responder's best friend. He is unbelievable in his steadfast support for everything we believe in. Curt is very generous in his assessment of my role, but it is his work, his labor, his efforts that make this historic bill here—gives us this bill to sign today. I want to salute Chief Gallagher; Gene Bidoli, the president of the Firemen's Association of Delaware County. I want to salute the 20 national presidents that are here today representing a million and a half emergency responders all across our great country.

It's an honor to be here. And I guess like every kid in America, I grew up wondering whether I could ever be a fireman. Barbara saw me drilling a hole in the Lincoln Bedroom the other day, trying to put a fire pole down, curving it around to go down into the Oval Office. But I am here today to sign the Benjamin Franklin National Memorial Commemorative Medal and Fire Service Bill of Rights Act. It authorizes the minting of a medal commemorating Benjamin Franklin's contribution to the advancement of science and the American fire service.

The activities funded through the sale of the medal we're going to authorize today will help to carry out your important bill of rights. The proceeds will help promote education and training programs, a greater public awareness and support of the many hazards of firefighting and emergency response. And they will help assure that should the ultimate tragedy occur, your loved ones will be taken care of.

The list of benefits from this medal goes on and on, and so does the courage of the American firefighters. And I know that it can be touch and go in some situations, some of the calls that you respond to, the danger that every firefighter faces when entering a burn-

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ing building or responding to an accident. For your bravery and for your unfailing dedication, I say this from the bottom of my heart: Thank you on behalf of all Americans.

Also included in this act is the Fire Service Bill of Rights. It is a tribute to all of you. It acknowledges the important contributions that firefighters make to their communities. But most of all, the Fire Service Bill of Rights is long-awaited and much-deserved recognition for all you do for your country.

As some of you may know, Teddy Roosevelt is among my favorite Presidents in history, and let me share with you what his father said to him on his 16th birthday. He said, "We are not placed here to live exclusively for ourselves." And you serve, you serve. You serve not only for yourselves alone, obviously, but for the family called America.

And on behalf of that family, thank you. May God bless each and every one of you. All of you are heroes in my book. And may God bless the State of Pennsylvania and this wonderful country that we are fortunate enough to live in, the United States of America.

And now you will see me sign enthusiastically and make official this very important act. Thank you all very much.

Note: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. at Springfield Township Fire Co. No. 44. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Representative Curt Weldon. H.R. 2448, approved October 12, was assigned Public Law No. 102-406. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Community in Springfield

October 12, 1992

The President. Thank you very, very much. Give them the sign. [Laughter] Thank you very, very much. Let me say it's great to be back here in Springfield, great to be back in this all-important part of Pennsylvania, and great to be accompanied by one of the true national leaders who is your Congressman, Curt Weldon. He's doing an outstanding job.