

Draft 01/09/01 9:30pm
Jeff Shesol

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS AT UNVEILING OF FDR STATUE
FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL
WASHINGTON, DC
January 10, 2001**

Acknowledgments: Secs. Herman, Babbitt, Shalala & Slater; Sens. Cleland, Levin & Harkin TBD; former Sen. Bumpers; Reps. Levin, Engel, & Langevin; Mike Deland, Chair, NOD; Anne & Jim Roosevelt; Bob Graham, sculptor; Larry Halperin, architect; Peter Kovler; the U.S. Navy Band

I am always energized by my visits here. It was almost four years ago that I had the honor of dedicating this memorial; and I returned in December 1999 for the last bill signing of the 20th Century. Every time I set foot in this remarkable space, I marvel again at the living legacy of Franklin Roosevelt. His accomplishments are not only part of history, but shape our lives even today, in this new century. His words may be carved in granite, but they still take flight; they still summon us to become something greater than we are, both as individuals and as a nation.

Last Saturday marked the 60th anniversary of President Roosevelt's speech on "the four freedoms." It is fitting that we remember it here today. For the story told by this memorial is one of freedom: freedom's steady advance across our land, from the schoolroom to the voting booth to the corridors of power... freedom's open arms, embracing the tired, the poor, the huddled masses from every shore... freedom's rising tide across the globe, as more people, in more places, secure the blessings of liberty.

Today we unveil a new monument to freedom. By that I mean the power of every man or woman to transcend circumstance; to laugh, like Roosevelt, in the face of fate; to learn, to speak, to see, to lead, to make the very most of what God has given you. That, to me, is what this statue represents. This remarkable statue of President Roosevelt is not built at a scale that's larger than life; it is not raised on a pedestal like so many other statues we have seen. It is remarkable for precisely those reasons. The power of this statue is in its immediacy – the window it offers into the mostly private struggle of a very public man.

In April 1997, when I called for a depiction of FDR's disability here at the Memorial, I knew that he hid his disability, except on rare occasion. Of course, FDR lived in a different time, when most Americans thought being disabled meant being unable. And though he proved them wrong every single day, Franklin Roosevelt let very few people ever see him in a wheelchair. Of the more than 10,000 photos in his archives, only four show him as he's depicted here today.

Roosevelt knew the impact of that image. He knew it could end his political life. But he also knew its power to inspire – and used it, on rare occasion, and to great effect. FDR's adviser and speechwriter, Sam Rosenman, said he could never forget – as he put it – "the look of courage and faith and self-reliance and affection in the faces" of disabled Americans who were given the

privilege of seeing FDR struggle with his own disability – and the joy of watching him overcome it.

In the summer of 1944, for example, President Roosevelt spent an afternoon at a naval hospital in Hawaii. The men there had been seriously wounded – many had lost limbs – in some of the fiercest fighting of the Second World War. FDR insisted on wheeling himself into their wards. He wanted to show them that he – the President of the United States – could not walk any better than they; but he could still show courage and hope and inner strength, and he could still lead a nation, even in war.

FDR said that returning Americans with disabilities to active and productive lives was “a great objective for the nation... one of the greatest causes of humanity.” That was one of the basic tenets of the New Deal: the inherent worth of all Americans; and our shared responsibility to empower them with the tools and skills to contribute to the building of our nation.

In my eight years as President, I have sought to renew these enduring ideals of inclusion, independence, and empowerment. They matter even more in an Information Age. As Secretary Herman described, this is a time of unprecedented opportunity, with more than 22 million new jobs and the lowest unemployment in 30 years. We shouldn’t let the potential of any American go untapped. That’s why we have worked to bring down barriers and build up the ability of all Americans – including those with disabilities – to succeed. That’s one way we can ensure that the longest economic expansion in history keeps growing longer.

For eight years we have done everything in our power to reward work: we doubled the Earned Income Tax Credit for the hardest pressed working Americans; we enacted the Family and Medical Leave law; and we raised the minimum wage. With the help of many of you, we made sure that Americans with disabilities don’t have to lose their health care when they go to work. Our administration strengthened its commitment to the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, to make sure no one is denied a chance at the high-skill, high-wage jobs of the new economy.

Even in the last days of our administration, we haven’t stopped working to promote opportunity. We’re launching a new public-private partnership to increase employment of Americans with disabilities; we’re providing alternatives to institutions; and we’re releasing a report on the progress we’ve made – as well as the challenges ahead.

We know there is more work to do; more barriers to bring down; more prejudice to be put to rest. This is difficult work. But anytime our spirits flag, the sight of this statue will help lift them. Anytime the odds seem long, the “happy warrior” will help them seem surmountable. For we must never stop working to widen the circle of opportunity until it includes every American, even the men and women at its margins. We must – as Franklin Roosevelt told a little girl who had been, like him, stricken by polio – we must, he wrote, “keep up the splendid fight.” If the life of President Roosevelt holds one central lesson for America’s future, it is that we can win the fight, for we have always been more than equal to any challenge we face.

Thank you.

From: Sonya N. Hebert on 01/08/2001 10:43:51 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Anna Richter/OPD/EOP@EOP

cc:

bcc:

Subject: Re: FDR memorial deliverables 

did you get your answer on this?

Karin Kullman

 Karin Kullman

01/08/2001 01:57:21 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Loretta M. Ucelli/WHO/EOP@EOP, Sonya N. Hebert/WHO/EOP@EOP, Sarah E. Gegenheimer/WHO/EOP@EOP

cc: Anna Richter/OPD/EOP@EOP

Subject: FDR memorial deliverables

Here is a complete list of the deliverables that we have that can be put out on paper for Wednesday's FDR event. NOTE: Both Chris Jennings and Barbara Chow thought that we should at least have one line in the speech making a passing reference to the fact that the Administration is putting out these deliverables.

Please let me know today if you're ok with us including ALL of these items in the press paper as I know there are quite a few.

NEW ACTIONS TO PROMOTE HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED CARE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. Today, the Department of Health and Human Services will release guidance for all 50 states to assist them in their efforts to enable individuals with disabilities to live in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs. This guidance includes information necessary to apply for: 1) \$15 million in grant funds from HHS and HUD to assist individuals transitioning from institutional to community-based care settings; 2) \$50 million in systems change grant funds to assist states in developing service options that make it possible for people with disabilities to live in their communities; 3) and grants to improve community-based personal assistance services. *[place for SSA deliverable?]*

Task Force Report. As required under Executive Order 13078, the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities is finalizing its third annual report, documenting the Administration's activities in promoting employment of Americans with disabilities over the past year and offering recommendations for the future. The report commends the

Clinton-Gore Administration for acting on last year's recommendations, as well as actively promoting the goals of economic opportunity, independence and self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities throughout President Clinton's tenure.

President's Disability Employment Partnership Board. OMB is presently clearing and Executive Order that would fulfill one of last year's recommendations by creating the President's Disability Employment Partnership Board within the new office of the Assistant Secretary of Disability Policy that was proposed in our budget and funded in the final Labor-HHS package. This Board would serve as a liaison to the private sector in promoting public-private partnerships aimed at increasing employment and other economic opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The Task Force is working with Presidential Personnel on a list of proposed appointments to this Board, including Tony Coelho as Chairperson, and other members of the business, labor, and research communities. The Chairperson, and possibly two Vice-Chairs could be ready for announcement by January 10, 2001.

Expanding Medicaid Eligibility for People with Disabilities—1902(r)(2) Rule. HCFA is ready to publish a final rule that expands Medicaid eligibility for people with disabilities by allowing states to disregard portions of an individual's income when determining their eligibility, such as the amount spent on food or shelter. This action allows states to provide Medicaid coverage to people who would not otherwise be eligible, resulting in:

- People moving from institutions into the community because they can retain additional income to pay for food, clothing, and shelter; and
- People continuing or returning to work by ensuring that they will not lose their health insurance coverage if their income increases slightly.

PRESIDENT CLINTON UNVEILS THE NEW FDR MEMORIAL ADDITION AND HONORS FDR'S LEGACY

January 10, 2001—DRAFT 1/8 11:30pm

Today, at the unveiling of the new Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial addition [OPL—is this the proper name?], the President will take new actions to continue FDR's legacy of empowering all Americans and to reaffirm the Clinton-Gore Administration's commitment to the goals of equal opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for all Americans, including people with disabilities. The President will announce guidance by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to help individuals with disabilities move from institutions to home- and community-based care settings. He will also highlight a report by the President's Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities that documents the Administration's accomplishments and recommends further steps in promoting the employment of Americans with disabilities. President Clinton will launch the new President's Disability Employment Board charged with promoting public-private partnerships to increase the economic opportunities of people with disabilities. Finally, he will announce a rule that the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) plans to finalize, extending earned-income disregards as an employment incentive for individuals with disabilities to a broader range of housing assistance programs. [do we want to include this last deliverable?]

Unveiling the New FDR Memorial Addition. Today, the President will dedicate the completed FDR Memorial, including an additional outdoor room at the main entrance depicting FDR in the small wheelchair he invented. Announced by Vice President Gore on July 2, 1998, this outdoor sculpture will complete the Memorial which was first dedicated by President Clinton on May 2, 1997 to honor the 32nd President of the United States. The Clinton-Gore Administration also helped secure the \$3 million last year to fund the memorial addition, whose design shows how FDR became one of our greatest presidents while he had a disability, and left a lasting legacy of empowerment for all Americans.

Promoting Home- and Community-based Care for People with Disabilities. Today, HHS will release guidance for all 50 states to assist them in their efforts to enable individuals with disabilities to live in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs. This guidance includes information necessary to apply for: 1) \$15 million in grant funds from HHS and HUD to assist individuals transitioning from institutional to community-based care settings; 2) \$50 million in systems change grant funds to assist states in developing service options that make it possible for people with disabilities to live in their communities; and 3) grants to improve community-based personal assistance services. [Health team--are 2) and 3) from HHS and HUD also?]

Reporting Progress and Next Steps in Promoting Employment of Adults with Disabilities. As directed by the President in Executive Order 13078, the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities is releasing its third annual report today, documenting the Administration's activities in promoting employment of Americans with disabilities over the past year and offering recommendations for the future. The report commends the Clinton-Gore Administration for acting on last year's recommendations and includes a dedication to the President Clinton, Vice-President Gore, and the Members of the Clinton-Gore Cabinet on the Task Force for their leadership and commitment over the years to improving the lives of millions of individuals with disabilities.

Fostering Public-Private Partnerships to Improve Economic Opportunities for Americans with Disabilities. The President will fulfill one of the recommendations included in last year's

report by signing an Executive Order to create the President's Disability Employment Partnership Board. This new Board, whose membership will include representatives from across the private sector, will give advice and help facilitate public-private partnerships aimed at increasing employment and other economic opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This Board will serve within the new Office of Disability Employment Policy, which the President proposed in his FY2001 budget and which Congress funded in the final FY2001 Consolidated Omnibus Appropriations bill.

Expanding Employment Incentives for People with Disabilities to a Broader Range of Housing Assistance Programs. Today the President will also announce that HUD is finalizing a rule to expand incentives for employment for people with disabilities, extending earned income disregards, currently applicable only to public housing, to tenant-based Section 8 housing vouchers, the HOME program, the Housing for Opportunities for People with AIDS program, and the Supportive Housing for the Homeless program. The rule, announced as a proposal by the Vice-President in commemorating the 10th anniversary of the ADA, also clarifies that deductions for disability-related expenses, such as medical or attendant care expenses, are applicable to the entire range of HUD housing programs.

A RECORD OF WORKING ON BEHALF OF AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES.

President Clinton and Vice President Gore have worked hard to achieve equal opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities, including:

- Vigorously defending the Americans with Disabilities Act in court cases across the nation;
- Working to implement the Supreme Court's Olmstead decision, which prohibits unjustified isolation of institutionalized persons with disabilities;
- Helping ensure that 80% of America's public transit buses are now accessible;
- Signing into law and implementing the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act; and
- Creating the Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities to develop a comprehensive, coordinated employment agenda for Americans with disabilities.

DELIVERABLES FOR FDR MEMORIAL SCULPTURE DEDICATION CEREMONY—1/5 11:40AM

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