



OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

MARY ELIZABETH "TIPPER" GORE

Tipper Gore is the wife of Vice President Al Gore. She is a well-known children's advocate and has been actively involved with issues related to mental health and homelessness.

Most recently, Mrs. Gore served as the Mental Health Advisor to the President's Task Force on National Health Reform. She advised the task force on how mental health could best be incorporated into fundamental reforms in the nation's health care system. She was committed to assisting the task force develop a system which included quality, affordable mental health care.

As founder of Tennessee Voices for Children, Mrs. Gore established a coalition to promote the development of services for children and youth with serious behavioral, emotional, substance abuse or other mental health problems. She also served as co-chair of the Child Mental Health Interest Group, a non-partisan group of spouses of current and former members of Congress and the Administration. The group sought to increase support for children with mental and emotional disorders and their families.

Mrs. Gore has served as Board Chair of Families for the Homeless, a non-partisan partnership of Congressional, Administration and media families that aims to raise public awareness about homeless people and their needs. As a co-founder of the group, Mrs. Gore worked with the National Mental Health Association (NMHA) to produce a major photographic exhibit entitled, "Homeless in America: A Photographic Project", depicting the plight of the nation's homeless. The exhibit opened at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C. in 1988 and was on tour across the country for two years.

As a long-time champion of children's causes, Mrs. Gore helped form the Congressional Wives Task Force, serving as Chair in 1978 and 1979. One of the Task Force's key activities during that time centered on drawing attention to the levels of violence children were exposed to on television. She also has written a book about parenting and the media and founded an organization to encourage the voluntary labeling of explicit music lyrics.

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In 1970 she married Al Gore from Carthage, Tennessee. She worked in the photography department of the Nashville Tennessean until 1976, when Vice President Gore was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Born Mary Elizabeth Aitcheson on August 19, 1948, Mrs. Gore grew up in Arlington, Virginia; she was nicknamed Tipper by her mother. Mrs. Gore graduated from Boston University in 1970, receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology; she also earned a Master's degree in Psychology from George Peabody College in 1975.

An avid photographer, Mrs. Gore is well-known for the many photographs she has taken while travelling the country. A strong proponent of regular exercise, she jogs, bikes and enjoys roller blading with her children.

The Gores have four children: Kareenna (born August 6, 1973), Kristin (June 5, 1977), Sarah (January 7, 1979) and Albert III (October 19, 1982).

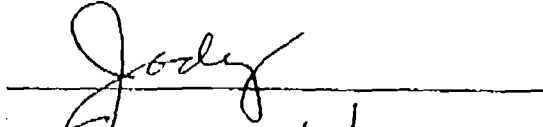
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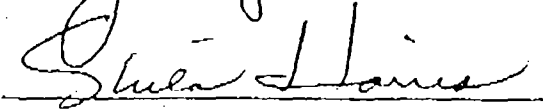
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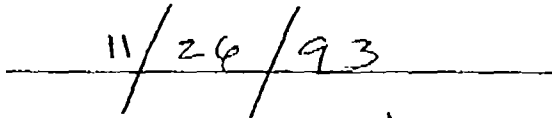
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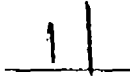
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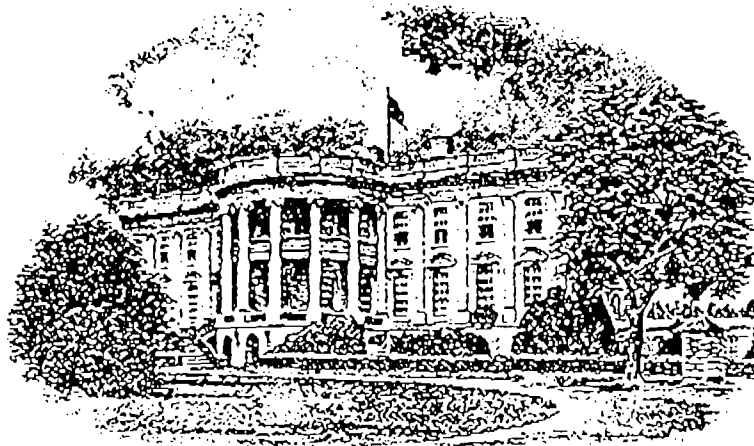
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Prepared Remarks
Tipper Gore
Glamour Magazine Luncheon Observing Child Health Day
Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC
October 4, 1993

I am truly honored to be here today to join you in observing Child Health Day.

Thank you for such a kind introduction Jack. Glamour Magazine should be commended for hosting today's luncheon. The people in this room this afternoon represent true leadership and vision when it comes to nurturing our children. Not only does the magazine honor these very special members of our community, it is providing a forum in which we can discuss our vision for the future of our children.

Let's face it ... the issue is no longer politics -- it's people, our children and our families.

As you all know, the American Health Foundation today released the 1993 Youth Health Report Card. The report card showed that for a second year in a row, U.S. children and adolescents have unacceptable health behavior in the areas of excessive calorie intake, lack of physical activity, tobacco use, and alcohol and drug abuse. The report also showed increased violence, suicide and the spread of AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases among teen-aged children.

THIS CAN NOT CONTINUE!!!

We have to do something to ensure basic programs are available to every American family to make sure that our children get a healthy start to life.

And this Administration is committed to doing just that.

One of the first measures President Clinton signed into law after he assumed office was the Family Medical Leave Act. He knew, as we all do in this room today, that there is no justifiable reason why a parent should have to choose between family and job. Working and parenting are NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE.

I am so proud to be part of an Administration which has endorsed measures which allow family members the flexibility to care for their loved ones -- whether it is celebrating birth or comforting during crisis. (PAUSE)

As you all know, the American people and the Congress -- led by the President and the First Lady -- have begun a great national discussion about the direction of health care in our country. If last week's Congressional hearings, and Mrs. Clinton's

outstanding testimony are any sign of things to come, it's clear that we're truly facing what the President has called a "magic moment in history."

Our task in the months ahead is as simple as our health care crisis is complex: We must preserve what is right about American health care -- and fix what is wrong. (PAUSE)

The President's Health Security Plan will provide security and comprehensive coverage for the 8.3 million American children who now have no health insurance.

Over the decade, the amount the average American family spent on health care more than doubled from \$1,742 to \$4,296. Health care costs are projected to double again by the year 2000 if nothing is done. (PAUSE)

There is no justifiable reason why 30% of all American children under the age of two and 50% of some inner-city children, have not been immunized against preventable childhood disease.

Nor is there any reason why 1 in 5 American children had no contact with a doctor in 1992.

The Health Security Plan will help provide children and families with comprehensive benefits and peace of mind, and will include specific initiatives aimed at keeping children healthy. (PAUSE)

As some of you know, today also marks the beginning of National Mental Health Awareness Week. As the mental health advisor to our Health Care Task Force team, I spend the past several months fighting to change mental health coverage so that it reflects medical reality... To end discrimination against diseases of the mind... To debate and analyze mental illness the same way we do all other illnesses... And to shatter, once and for all, the myths about mental disorders. (PAUSE)

More than 52 million Americans are impacted by a mental health issue in any given year. These illnesses cut across all lines... of education, economic status, race, gender, religion and AGE.

According to a recent study by the Institute of Medicine, as many as 14 million American children may have a mental illness. Yet more often than not, parents, teachers and primary-care physicians fail to recognize or diagnose the disorder. Thus, it is not surprising -- but certainly is appalling -- that only one in FIVE children with a mental illness receives care.

Equally appalling is the fact that half a million teenagers attempt suicide each year. A shocking 5,000 teenagers succeed, an average of 14 every day. In too many cases, these tragic losses are preventable.

I am extremely pleased that for the first time ever, mental health and substance abuse services will be an integral component of the national system of health care. This represents a historic change in the way mental health and substance abuse have been treated at the national level.

If the Congress follows the President's lead, the year 1996 will mark the first time EVERY AMERICAN will have some mental health and substance abuse coverage. (PAUSE)

We all need to continue to encourage our children to expand their horizons and take healthy risks. We also need to approach childhood learning with a vision and provide our children with the tools to safely follow their dreams.

We must encourage parents to take responsibility for themselves and their children. We should provide incentives for the kind of behavior that leads to a better learning environment for our children. Because, as adults, each of us is responsible for the health and well-being of all of our children.

Personally, I take pride in my work to foster emotional and physical well-being in our nation's young people. As Americans, we are accountable for the growth and development of our children. As leaders, we must work together to create and implement programs which make life better for children and families.

Child Health Day and today's discussions can only serve to enhance what America's vision should be concerning our children. Together, we can do what America has always done -- lift each other, our children, and our families, to a wider peace and greater prosperity.

Prepared Remarks
Tipper Gore
Address Before
National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression
(NARSAD)
New York, New York
October 1, 1993

Thank you so much.

It is a great honor to be here in New York to speak to this alliance. This organization is led by some of the finest and most dedicated people it is my privilege to know.

Many of us here today have struggled for years about how to tackle problems everyone knows exist -- but nobody wants to talk about. NARSAD has been a powerful force in this struggle.

Maintaining the momentum needed to pursue the innovative research that will lead to improved care of the mentally ill is the heart of NARSAD's work. The heroic research achievements recognized here tonight are but a few of the many accomplishments of the hundreds of gifted scientists that you have supported. And by encouraging dialogue among mental health professionals, consumers and community leaders, NARSAD has taken crucial steps toward making sure the delivery of mental health services matches new scientific realities. It is a vital task -- one that everyone in this room should take great pride in -- and I commend you for that.

It is particularly appropriate at this historic time to be speaking to you about a monumental change in our nation's history -- the inclusion of mental health and substance abuse services in national health reform. As I have travelled across the country over the past eight months, I have been repeatedly moved by the compassionate, dedicated and committed advocates with whom I have the honor of sharing a common goal: **TREATING MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES WITH THE FAIRNESS AND RESPECT AFFORDED ALL OTHER ILLNESSES.**

As you all know, the American people and the Congress -- led by the President and the First Lady -- have begun a great national discussion about the direction of health care in our country. If this week's Congressional hearings, and Mrs. Clinton's outstanding testimony are any sign of things to come, it's clear that we're truly facing what the President has called a "magic moment in history."

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As the groundswell of desire to provide health security to every American grows -- and as the critical mass for change grows in the Congress, both among Democrats and Republicans -- it is our obligation to listen to the people and act. We have a President who is absolutely committed to getting that job done. We have a President who is willing to put himself and his administration on the line. A President who has challenged Congress to pass legislation this session. A President we can be proud of.

Our task in the months ahead is as simple as our health care crisis is complex: We must preserve what is right about American health care -- and fix what is wrong.

More than anything, the American health care crisis is a crisis of **SECURITY**.

We are all familiar with the statistics: 37 million Americans are without health insurance, and that number is growing by 100,000 people a month. Millions more are underinsured. And if you think that access to health insurance is a poor person's problem, let me remind you that 85% of those without insurance are working people and their families.

Those of us who **ARE** currently insured -- and that includes most of the people in this room -- cannot, with any certainty, know whether we will be insured to the same degree, at the same cost, next year at this time -- or even next month. We can not predict what might happen to us. Whether a family member will suffer some illness or accident... whether we will lose a job...be forced to move...or, as so frequently happens often, simply watch our insurance disappear when we need it most.

America's health care security crisis affects **every one** of us. We are all but one job or one illness from having less, or **NO**, health insurance.

Every American must have health care coverage, and that coverage **must** be secure no matter who you work for, where you work, where you live, or whether you have ever been sick.

That is why the President's Health Security Plan calls for coverage that is seamless and comprehensive. Every American -- **BECAUSE** you are an American -- and not because you work for a big or small company, or live in New York or Tennessee, or have a good or bad health history -- **WILL BE COVERED**.

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The President's Health Security Plan is based on six principles which embody the administration's efforts to reform America's health care system: Security, Simplicity, Savings, Choice, Quality, and Responsibility. In return for taking responsibility, every American will be guaranteed a **COMPREHENSIVE SET OF BENEFITS THAT CAN NEVER BE TAKEN AWAY.**

The benefits package will include the kind of care that the insurance packages that most large companies offer to their employees. And that means strong mental health benefits. And that means substance abuse benefits.

As the mental health advisor to our Health Care Task Force team, my primary task was fighting to change mental health coverage so that it reflects medical reality... To end discrimination against diseases of the mind... To debate and analyze mental illness the same way we do physical illness... And to shatter, once and for all, the myths about mental disorders.

As all of us know in this glittering ballroom all too well, one in four families will experience the coarse ache of mental illness during their lifetimes. More than 52 million Americans are impacted by a mental health issue in any given year.

These illnesses cut across all lines... of education, economic status, race, gender, religion and age. And they rob our economy of more than 270 billion dollars each year... in lost productivity, direct treatment, and social impact.

Changing attitudes about mental illness will make it easier to change policy. Yet we imagine that mental illness is an insurmountable barrier.

This era's illusions about mental illness are exhausted... and it is time for this era to end.

In its place, we must build a new era together.

In this new era, severe mental illnesses must be addressed the same as diabetes or heart disease... as biological disorders treatable with medication and other therapies enabling those with a mental health issue to live productive lives.

Public policy must finally catch up with medical reality. It must recognize that treatments for panic disorder and bipolar disorders, schizophrenia and major depression have success rates 20 to 100 percent higher than common cardiovascular surgical treatments.

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In this new era we must build together, providing coverage for mental illnesses will markedly reduce the social and economic costs of current policy failures. We must remember that byproducts of untreated or mistreated mental illness include violent crime... substance abuse, which in turn contributes to a host of other problems... the tragedy of suicide... the horrors of family violence... increases in physical ailments and diseases... and homelessness.

For the first time ever, mental health and substance abuse services will be an integral component of the national system of health care. This represents a historic change in the way mental health and substance abuse have been treated at the national level.

If the Congress follows the President's lead, the year 1996 will mark the first time EVERY AMERICAN will have some mental health and substance abuse coverage.

Lifetime and annual mental health and substance abuse coverage limits **WILL BE ELIMINATED**. Over the past seven months, I have spoken to hundreds of people about the need to include mental health and substance abuse in any national health reform plan. What I heard over and over again was that after a while, many people had their coverage run out -- they had exhausted their benefit. This Plan provides every American with the **SECURITY** of knowing they are covered and **WILL NOT LOSE** that coverage.

Individuals with a wide range of mental and substance abuse disorders will be covered **AND** exclusion from coverage based on pre-existing conditions **WILL BE ELIMINATED -- IT WILL BE ILLEGAL**.

The new benefit is designed to encourage use of proven, innovative, cost-effective alternatives to inpatient treatment. It includes non-residential options such as partial hospitalization, day treatment, psychiatric rehabilitation, ambulatory detoxification, home-based services and behavioral aide services.

Family members of an individual receiving mental or substance abuse services may receive medically necessary or appropriately related services in conjunction with the patient -- so-called collateral treatment.

In addition, outpatient services including diagnosis, brief office visits for medical management, substance abuse counseling and relapse prevention are covered to encourage early intervention and less restrictive treatment options.

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And we can no longer justify the medical-industrial complex's refusal to approach mental health with fairness and justice.

In this new era that we must build together, mental health services for children demand more attention. As you all know, children's mental health is my consuming passion.

According to a recent study by the Institute of Medicine, as many as 14 million American children may have a mental illness. Yet more often than not, parents, teachers and primary-care physicians fail to recognize or diagnose the disorder.

Thus, it is not surprising -- but certainly is appalling -- that only one in FIVE children with a mental illness receives care.

The cost of this policy failure is brought home to me on a personal level by the letters I receive and the people I visit. You know, the health care Task Force received over 700,000 letters. I recall one letter in particular:

***A woman from PA wrote to me recently. She said she had been suffering with a mental illness for over 20 years. She takes medication daily and sometimes must be hospitalized. She says it is "pure agony to be mentally ill. It has a terrible affect on your children, grandchildren, sisters, brothers, friends, everyone." To top it off, she and her husband are social security recipients and only have a modest savings. Her main concern was that she is not entitled to Life Insurance because of her medical history. She says, "We can't even afford to be buried. Where does that leave my family? They can't afford to bury me. I am the mother of six married children raising their own children." Mary has plenty of things to look forward to -- she will soon begin volunteer work with the mentally ill and hopes to get a grant to attend a community college and study psychology. Why should Mary's freedom be ruled by a preexisting condition?

Mary, and millions like her, desperately need a change in our health care system so that they -- and their families -- can lead healthy, fulfilling and productive lives.

So do the parents of teenagers, half a million of whom attempt suicide each year. A shocking 5,000 teenagers succeed, an average of 14 every day. In too many cases, these tragic losses are preventable.

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I feel we have reached a critical point in our collective effort to change how this country perceives and cares for individuals with mental illnesses. The politics of mental health have been changed forever. Never before has the mental health community had so many advocates in the White House and so much support in the Congress.

Mental health advocates have fewer "enemies" to fight and more "friends" to work with. This means our mind set must change as well as our tactics -- like our current health care system, our old strategies are outdated.

I am convinced there is a new political reality. I am going to stick to my goals but rethink my approach...change doesn't have to mean compromise!

I do not want there to be any difference between coverage for mental and physical illnesses....and based on President Clinton's Health Care Security Plan there won't be by the year 2001.

I wish it was sooner. I wish there were more generous benefits in the interim. I wish there was a magic number we could show someone that would convince the "number people" not to be so conservative.

But, despite these reservations, THE REALITY IS -- we have made tremendous progress. I will not let myself forget that, nor will I let the mental health community forget it. The massive efforts to have mental health benefits incorporated in the Administration's health care reform proposal is not an end unto itself. It is only the first skirmish in a much longer battle...

We are going to make history by seizing the moment and working together to ensure passage of a Health Security Plan that will provide SECURITY to every American -- including Americans impacted by a mental health issue.

I remain committed to this cause. I will be on the road, on Capitol Hill, on the telephone and on call to do everything I can to keep what we have gained intact and to support passage of the Plan. I want to know that I did all I could. If all of us here share this commitment, then there is no doubt that we will succeed.

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President Clinton made a bold move in addressing and solving this nation's current health care crisis. He has presented to the nation, a Plan that provides access to quality, comprehensive and affordable health care. A Plan based on the fundamental principle that health care is not a privilege -- it must be a right of all Americans. A right that is not dependent on your health status or your job, but one that goes with you and your family, from job to job, from state to state, from wellness to illness. That is what a right is all about, and that is the right the President's plan will guarantee to all citizens.

Security is the cornerstone of the new American health care partnership and of the Clinton reform plan.

But getting from here to there will not be easy. The history of health care reform is one of deadlock, self-interest, unproductive partisanship and failure.

But if a fundamentally different system seems like too much to ask.. let us remember that our present system is already asking too much.

If some try to suggest that a new system will cost too much, let us remember how much it can save; and let us remember that the present system is already breaking us.

And if some express fear about the course of change, let us recognize that, in this case at least, the status quo is the scariest option of all.

And let us, as the President has said, have the **COURAGE** to change. Let us look upon this need for change as a challenge. And let us remember that when we are challenged, Americans are at their very best.