

base. And I know that's what you want to do, too.

Senator Jeffords. I certainly do, and we made a big step in that direction yesterday. And Nancy Kassebaum and also Dave Durenberger, with me, put an amendment in that I think if we'd been able to pass it, it probably would have gotten on board. And—

The President. What was the amendment?

Senator Jeffords. —it gave me confidence that we're going to be able to do it on the floor. And I've talked to a number of others. I'm confident, again, that when we get on the Senate floor and with a little more tinkering,

we'll be able to get a good bipartisan bill for you.

The President. Well, I'm ready to work with you. We can do it. We can do it. Thanks to you, and I'll never forget it. And let's just keep working at it.

Senator Jeffords. Okay, thank you. And I thank the First Lady for her call this morning. I deeply appreciated that, and it's been great working with her and Ira Magaziner. They're two wonderful people.

The President. Thanks. Have a good day.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:54 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

The President's Radio Address

June 11, 1994

Good morning. For me and for many of you, last week was a time of remembrance and rededication. As we marked the 50th anniversary of D-Day, a grateful nation honored the generation of heroes who fought and won World War II and built us 50 years of freedom.

I had the privilege of representing our country at ceremonies honoring all those who liberated Europe. It was an experience I'll never forget. And I came home with a renewed sense of commitment to the work we must do in our time.

The generation of heroes whom we honored last week never lost faith in the promise of America. They worked their way out of the Great Depression, defeated fascism on three continents, and built half a century of prosperity for their children and grandchildren. With the history they made they proved what a great democracy can accomplish when we work together for a great purpose.

Yet today, too many have lost that faith. After years of deadlock and division and drift, too many doubt that our democratic process can change our lives for the better. Well, democracy can be imperfect. After all, it's run by and it represents human beings. Its workings are often untidy, and its pace can be frustratingly slow. But unlike any other system of government, it allows the people's wisdom to prevail, and ultimately something good and decent gets done.

This morning I want to tell you about something profoundly important we're working to accomplish. For weeks we've been told that health care reform is dead, that America will continue to be the only advanced country in the world that spends more than anybody else on health care and does less with it, leaving tens of millions of our fellow citizens without health insurance, tens of millions more with inadequate insurance, and even more with the constant risk of losing their coverage. But the truth is, in spite of all the naysayers, our Nation is closer than ever before to achieving a goal that President Truman set after World War II, "real health care security for every family."

Last week, for the first time in history, Congress took several giant steps toward a bill that answers the call of history and provides guaranteed private insurance for every American. Senator Kennedy's Labor and Human Resources Committee approved a bill providing guaranteed private insurance for every family. The Senate Finance Committee is moving forward under the leadership of Chairman Moynihan, who is also committed to achieving coverage for all Americans.

Meanwhile, other important congressional committees continue their work, and soon the House and the Senate will debate and decide on a bill that will make our families' anxieties about health care a thing of the past.

This isn't just about the uninsured, although their numbers are growing and nearing 40 million. It's also about the tens of millions of Americans, most of them hard-working, middle class people, who live with the uncertainty of never knowing whether their health care will be there when they need it. After all, they could have a member of their family get sick or they could lose their jobs or they could change jobs and they couldn't get insurance on the new one. The only way all of our people will be secure is when every American knows that whether they lose their job, change jobs, move their home, get sick, get injured, or just grow old, their health care will be there.

Others urge half-measures and quick fixes. They say they're reforming the health care system, but they fail to provide every American with the ironclad guarantee that they'll have private health insurance that can never be taken away. Health care reform just isn't the real thing unless middle class working people are guaranteed coverage, and after at least 50 years of delay, the American people deserve the real thing.

I'll tell you why I'm fighting so hard for this health care reform. Every day Hillary and I, the Vice President, people in our administration, we all hear about hard-working Americans whose lives are being torn apart by uncertainties about their health care. People like Jim Bryant, who told the Boston Globe that he works 70 hours a week but has no health insurance for his family. He wonders if it's fair that he misses his son's soccer games on Saturdays to go to his second job while people who are on welfare have health benefits he and his family don't have. In a moment of frustration he pointed out to his wife that if they broke up she and their sons could get benefits that working families like theirs can't afford.

That's just not right. No one who works should have to go on welfare to get health insurance. And everyone on welfare should have the opportunity to go to work without losing health care coverage. It's families like the Bryants who

will get no help at all from half-measures, quick fixes, and Band-Aid-style reforms. For the sake of these hard-working families, let's not leave anyone out. Let's cover everyone. Let's get the job done this year.

In the weeks ahead, you'll hear from special interests who do very well in the present system and who prefer the deadlock of political systems to the reform of health care. For months, those who do well in the present system and those who want for political reasons to beat health care reform, have blitzed the American people with mountains of false information about our health care plan. They say it means Government regulation of the whole system. They say it means taking away benefits from Americans. But the truth is what we want is private insurance for everyone. We want to keep the private health care delivery system that's the best in the world for people who have access to it. We want to give a break to small businesses so they can afford health insurance that's good. But we think everybody should be covered and everyone should take responsibility for doing it.

Now, if you keep faith with democracy, if you'll make your voice heard, we can break gridlock even on this most difficult issue that has frustrated Americans for 50 years. And the national interests will prevail over narrow interests. I know we can succeed.

Helen Keller once wrote that "the world is moved along not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker." Americans from every part of the country and every walk of life have called for fundamental health care reform this year. The steps that Congress took last week proved that the voice of the people is being heard.

I urge you to tell your elected Representatives that we need to do this, do it right, and do it now.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.