

But I will say this. He'll have a lot harder job unless you help us elect six Senators and at least six House Members. As I said, I could tell you a story about every one of these Senators who's here, and our candidate, that would make you feel more strongly. One of the things I've learned as President is, I always knew the Senate was important. I admired the whole story of all the great Senators in our history and the great creators. But it's even more important than I dreamed it was when I became President.

So the investment you've made tonight is a worthy investment. And I just hope when you leave here, some of what I have said has made an impression so that you will take every single, solitary opportunity you have between now and

November to tell people why you came tonight, why you stand where you stand, and why this election is so important to our future.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Fred Eychaner and Ken Lee; Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago, IL; event host committee members Joe and Yvonne Stroud, Lou Weisbach, and Bette Cerf Hill; Joseph A. Cari, Jr., finance cochair, Democratic National Committee; Illinois House Speaker Michael J. Madigan; and Governors Thomas R. Carper of Delaware and George W. Bush of Texas.

The President's Radio Address *May 20, 2000*

Good morning. For the last 7 years, we've worked hard to enhance the health and safety of the American people. Today I'd like to talk about new measures we're taking to save the lives of many thousands of men and women who fall victim to one of America's biggest killers, sudden cardiac arrest.

Every day—every day—more than 600 Americans die from sudden cardiac arrest. In some cases, the cause is long-term coronary artery disease. In others, it can be triggered by intense emotional or physical stress. Either way, the heart starts beating chaotically and cannot send blood to the brain and other vital organs.

The key of survival is the speed of response. In addition to CPR, most cardiac arrest victims need an immediate electrical shock to restore the heart's normal rhythm. When victims receive that shock within a minute, there's a 90 percent chance of resuscitation. When it takes 10 minutes, the odds fall to less than 5 percent. Keep in mind, in a big city with a lot of traffic, it can often take far more than 10 minutes for emergency medical technicians to arrive.

But thanks to new devices called automated external defibrillators, or AED's, a person with moderate training can now administer lifesaving shocks to someone in cardiac arrest. An AED, which is about the same size and price as a good laptop computer, uses voice commands to

lead the rescuer through every step and delivers a shock only if it's necessary.

Mike Tighe, a public health official in Boston, spent several years on a crusade to put AED's in police cars and fire trucks. A year and a half ago Mr. Tighe needed an AED himself. Four hours into a flight from Boston to Los Angeles, his arm started flailing and his head fell forward. A flight attendant used an onboard AED and saved his life. The device had been installed on the plane only 2 days before.

There are countless other stories of AED's saving people's lives. In the first 6 months after AED's were installed at Chicago's O'Hare Airport, 9 out of 11 people who went into cardiac arrest were saved. In Las Vegas, AED's in hotels and casinos have increased the survival rate from 14 percent to a remarkable 57 percent. Just last week a visitor here at the White House collapsed and would have died if not for one of the AED's that our medical unit acquired last year.

On the basis of successes like these, it's time for the National Government to help bring AED's to public places all over America. Today I'm pleased to announce three major steps to achieve that goal. First, I'm directing the Department of Health and Human Services and the General Services Administration to develop guidelines for putting AED's in all Federal

buildings. To help with this effort, the American Heart Association and the American Red Cross have volunteered to train Federal employees to use AED's.

Second, I'm working with Congress to complete a vital piece of legislation that would not only encourage the installation of AED's in Federal buildings but also grant legal immunity to good Samaritans who use them, whether in public or private buildings.

And third, I'm proposing a new rule that would require all commercial planes with at least one flight attendant to include an AED in their in-flight medical kit.

If this entire Nation comes together to place AED's in airplanes, Federal buildings, and other key locations, we can save more than 20,000 lives every single year. I expect there are very few people listening today who don't know someone who has been struck down by sudden

cardiac arrest. Perhaps a father, a great-aunt, a cherished teacher, a dear friend. With this new technology, we have the ability to turn around the odds.

We can give average citizens the power to restart a heart and save a life. It is now our responsibility to bring this technology, this modern miracle, to every community in America.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2:50 p.m. on May 19 at the Mayer Sulzberger Middle School in Philadelphia, PA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 20. In his remarks, the President referred to Michael Tighe, community affairs director, Boston Public Health Commission. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 19 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Memorandum on Automated External Defibrillators in Federal Buildings May 19, 2000

Memorandum for the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Administrator for General Services

Subject: Automated External Defibrillators in Federal Buildings

This country has taken many steps to try to reduce the number of persons who die each year from heart disease. Advances in the field of medicine and private-sector public education campaigns have helped to prevent and treat heart disease, but there is much more work we can do. Recent studies estimate that more than 250,000 persons die each year from sudden cardiac arrest—about 700 a day.

The most common lethal arrhythmia responsible for sudden cardiac arrest and collapse is ventricular fibrillation, which if treated quickly, can be reversed. By some estimates, one-quarter to one-third of people in sudden cardiac arrest might be saved with optimal emergency care. One of the most effective ways to reduce the number of people who die from sudden cardiac arrest is the prompt intervention of defibrillation. Estimates show that for every minute that passes without defibrillation, a victim's chances of survival decrease by seven to

ten percent. After as little as 10 minutes, very few resuscitation attempts are successful. Automated external defibrillators (AEDs), which deliver a shock through the chest wall to the heart and enable the heart to regain its own normal rhythm, may be a helpful adjunct to cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and local Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in saving lives.

Recently, private companies, local governments, and airports have begun instituting programs to put AEDs into place and have provided training programs on how to use the devices for their employees. In June of 1999, the City of Chicago put AEDs within a minute's walk in airport terminals with accompanying emergency medical support. In the first month after they were made available, the devices saved four lives. Similar results may be found in Las Vegas, where many buildings now provide AEDs.

The Federal Government employs approximately 1.8 million people. Many millions more visit Federal buildings each year. While a number of agencies such as the Department of