

was diagnosed with cancer. He was weakened by chemotherapy treatments and told he had a 50-50 chance of surviving. But he's done more than survive. As anybody who knows anything about sports knows, he's triumphed. His story, from cancer diagnosis to his fourth straight victory in the Tour de France, is one of the great human dramas in sports history.

And today—he asked me not to say it, so I'm going to say it anyway—[laughter]—is his 31st birthday. And now, it's my honor to present to you a son of Texas, a great American, a wonderful champ, Lance Armstrong.

[At this point, Lance Armstrong made brief remarks.]

*The President.* Appreciate you, Lance.

Again, thank you all for coming. We'll all be celebrating Lance's birthday in the State Dining Room here at the end of the hall. He made a little cake for you. He looks forward to you singing "Happy Birthday" to him. [Laughter]

In the meantime, many in this room are involved in this war. I want to thank you for your efforts, thank you for your love for your fellow Americans.

May God bless you all, and may God bless America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Mr. Armstrong. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

## Statement on Signing the John F. Kennedy Center Plaza Authorization Act of 2002

September 18, 2002

Today I have signed into law H.R. 5012, an Act to amend the John F. Kennedy Center Act, authorizing a construction project to improve, among other things, pedestrian, vehicular, and bicycle access to the Kennedy Center.

As added by H.R. 5012, however, section 12(b)(5) purports to make the Secretary of Transportation's (Secretary) entry into contracts "[s]ubject to the approval of the Board." Because the membership of the Board of Trustees of the Kennedy Center (Board) by law includes Members of Congress, the Board cannot constitutionally exercise executive power, such as the power to approve the exercise of contracting authority by the head of an executive department. The exercise of such power by Members of Congress would violate the separation of powers embodied in our Constitution.

It is not evident that the Congress would have withheld contracting authority from the Secretary absent the invalid Board approval requirement. Therefore the executive branch shall treat the Board approval requirement as severable from the remainder of section 12(b)(5), leaving fully operative the contracting authority granted to the Secretary. As a matter of comity, the Secretary shall consult the Board as appropriate in relation to the Secretary's exercise of the authority to enter into contracts under section 12(b)(5).

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,  
September 18, 2002.

NOTE: H.R. 5012, approved September 18, was assigned Public Law No. 107-224.