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beginning with Secretary Shalala's meeting in December, to develop a national action plan on breast cancer. But it is important that that plan be fit into a larger commitment to the health care of Americans: to put women's health concerns, from research to the delivery of health care, on an equal footing with men's; to say that it is better to focus on keeping people well than just treating them when they're sick, and when you focus on that you will find them when they're just a little sick and be able to get them well a whole lot quicker; and finally, to say that none of this will ever come to pass until we finally join the ranks of every other advanced country in this world and give every citizen of this country health care that is always there, that can never be taken away from them.

Every American can bring some weapon to this struggle, and your weapons are unique. They are not the dollars and deal-making talents of lobbyists or the stethoscopes or syringes of doctors and nurses. But they are the power of the pen and the petition and, most important of all, the power of the personal story. For in the end, America ought to be shaped by the lives of Americans, not just by the interests of Americans but by the values of Americans, not just by what we want when everything is going well but by what we need in our direst and most difficult moments.

I urge you to continue to fight in the months ahead. We can win this battle. As a part of the national drive for early breast cancer detection, tomorrow thousands of doctors and hospitals and medical centers across the country will offer discounted mammograms, thanks in no small measure to all of you.

I'm going to sign this proclamation when I finish my remarks which declares tomorrow National Mammography Day. I want to thank all the Members of Congress who pushed this through and two who are not here, Senator Biden and Congresswoman Marilyn Lloyd, who were sponsors of this legislation. And I want to remind you that you've got to continue to bring this level of intensity, of energy, of passion to this battle. You have the most powerful thing of all, personal stories. When American politics works best, it's when it reflects the lives of the American people. You can make sure on these issues we do that. And I hope you will.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:33 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Frances Visco, president, National Breast Cancer Coalition (NBCC); Dr. Susan Love, founder of the NBCC and director of the Breast Center at the University of California, Los Angeles; Matilda Cuomo, first lady of New York; and Lucinda Florio, first lady of New Jersey. Following his remarks, the President signed Proclamation 6615, National Mammography Day, 1993.

Proclamation 6615—National Mammography Day, 1993

October 18, 1993

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Breast cancer is an insidious disease that takes the lives of far too many women. This year alone, 182,000 American women are expected to develop breast cancer, and 46,000 will die of this disease. The risk of death from breast cancer is significantly reduced when the cancer is found in the earlier, more treatable stages of development. If women follow early detection guidelines, we should see a 30-percent drop in the breast cancer death rate. We all must work to ensure that every woman is informed about the serious risk of breast cancer and about the importance of regular breast exams and screening mammography. Most important, these health care procedures must be within the reach of all women.

The high survival rates of women who are diagnosed as having early stage breast cancer have motivated health professionals and other concerned citizens to focus their educational efforts on the importance of early detection. Women can take an active role in the fight against breast cancer through clinical breast exams, breast self-examination, and mammography. In many cases, cancers can be seen on a mammogram up to 2 years before they could be detected by a woman or her physician. The key to that advantage, however, is access to such screening.

I am pleased that third-party reimbursement for mammography is increasing, allowing more women to benefit from this life-saving procedure. Through Medicare, the Department of Health and Human Services covers much of the cost of screening mammography for women 65 and older. Most states and the District of Columbia now have laws requiring private insurers to offer coverage for this procedure. I urge every State government, insurance company, medical facility, and business to develop policies that ensure all women access to appropriate and affordable mammography. Of course, women must take responsibility for availing themselves of screening when it is available.

Likewise, health care professionals must make sure that their patients receive regular breast cancer screening. Businesses must offer screening to their employees in the form of insurance coverage or services offered. Community organizations and individuals not only must spread the word about the importance of early detection, but also must motivate women to get regular screenings.

I am heartened that we have the technology to discover breast cancer in its earliest stages, the means to motivate women to get regular mammograms, and the capability to treat early breast cancer successfully in most cases. These resources can save the lives of countless women. For the sake of American women and their loved ones, we all must strive to see that every woman is educated about early breast cancer detection and that she has access to all needed health care.

In recognition of the crucial role of mammography in the battle against breast cancer, the Congress, by House Joint Resolution 265, has designated October 19, 1993, as ''National Mammography Day'' and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this day.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 19, 1993, as ''National Mammography Day.'' I invite the Governors of the 50 States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, and the appropriate officials of all other jurisdictions under the American flag to issue similar proclamations. I also ask health care professionals, private industry, advocacy groups, community associations, insurance companies, and all other interested organizations and individuals to observe this day by publicly reaffirming our Nation's continuing commitment to the control of breast cancer.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighteenth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:57 a.m., October 19, 1993]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 20.

Interview With Radio Reporters

October 18, 1993

The President. First of all, I want to thank all of you for coming today and for offering all of us this opportunity to have a conversation with the radio listeners around the country and beyond.

I thought I would open just by saying that I have sent a letter this afternoon to Senator Mitchell in the Senate about some potential amendments to the defense appropriation bill and one actual amendment dealing with Bosnia, Haiti, and the whole command and control apparatus of our military as it relates to cooperation with other countries in peacekeeping and other endeavors. That amendment has actually been introduced.

The letter essentially says that I oppose the amendment that affects the way our military people do their business, working with NATO and other military allies. I think it unduly gets into the details of the command and control operations of the military, which I think is an error, and that I would oppose any amendments with regard to Haiti and Bosnia that were of questionable constitutionality and unduly restricted the ability of the President to make foreign policy, and outlines some of my concerns.

In Haiti, my concerns are that there should be no restrictions that would undermine the