

about the new Medicare benefits. The Federal Department of Transportation, under the leadership of Norm Mineta, is working with local agencies to post Medicare information in buses and at highway rest stops. Thousands of pharmacies are working with Medicare to provide information for seniors. Countless other organizations are holding community events and connecting with seniors face to face, so Medicare recipients can get their questions answered and make informed choices about prescription drug coverage. In other words, we're on a massive education effort, starting today. And I'm asking for America's help.

You can help by making a call to your mother or father and tell them what's available. You can help by showing an older neighbor how to fill out a form. You can help by spending an afternoon at the local retirement home. And by the way, when you help somebody, you're really helping yourself. You can get information 24 hours a day calling 1-800-MEDICARE. It's pretty easy to remember, 1-800-MEDICARE. Or you can use the Internet to visit the official Medicare web site at medicare.gov. All you've got to do is type in medicare.gov, and you're going to find out what I'm talking about.

Remember that information about prescription drug plans will be available starting October 1st, and November 15th is the first day to sign up for the new coverage. You need to circle those dates on your calendar and tell the seniors in your life that modern medicine is on the way. This is a good deal, and people need to take advantage of it.

I think the passage of the Medicare Modernization Act is a good lesson for all of us who work in this city. You know, it wasn't all that long ago the leaders who talked about Medicare reform faced a lot of name-calling—to say the least. When Congress finally rose above politics and fulfilled its duty to America's seniors, it showed what's possible in Washington, DC. We need that same spirit—[*applause*]. I mean, this bill is proof that Americans really aren't interested in seeing one party win and another party lose. What Americans want to see is people coming together to solve problems. That's what they want to see.

We had a problem in Medicare. It wasn't working the way it should. It wasn't modern. It wasn't answering the needs of our seniors. And by coming together, we have done our job here in Washington. And as a result of working together, we have changed Medicare for the better. Medicare is now modern, reformed, and compassionate. And I urge all seniors—all seniors and those folks here in America who want to help seniors, look into this new prescription drug benefit; it will make your life better.

Thank you all for coming. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:22 p.m. at the Department of Health and Human Services.

Statement on the Presidential Elections in Iran

June 16, 2005

In recent months, the cause of freedom has made enormous gains in the broader Middle East. Millions of people in Afghanistan and Iraq defied terrorists to cast their ballots in free elections. Palestinians voted for a new President who rejects violence and is working for democratic reform, and the people of Lebanon reclaimed their sovereignty and are now voting for new leadership. Across the Middle East, hopeful change is taking place. People are claiming their liberty. And as a tide of freedom sweeps this region, it will also come eventually to Iran.

The Iranian people are heirs to a great civilization—and they deserve a Government that honors their ideals and unleashes their talent and creativity. Today, Iran is ruled by men who suppress liberty at home and spread terror across the world. Power is in the hands of an unelected few who have retained power through an electoral process that ignores the basic requirements of democracy.

The June 17th Presidential elections are sadly consistent with this oppressive record. Iran's rulers denied more than a thousand people who put themselves forward as candidates, including popular reformers and women who have done so much for the cause of freedom and democracy in Iran.

The Iranian people deserve a genuinely democratic system in which elections are

honest—and in which their leaders answer to them instead of the other way around. The Iranian people deserve a truly free and democratic society with a vibrant free press that informs the public and ensures transparency. They deserve freedom of assembly, so Iranians can gather and press for reform and a peaceful, loyal opposition can keep the Government in check. They deserve a free economy that delivers opportunity and prosperity and economic independence from the state. They deserve an independent judiciary that will guarantee the rule of law and ensure equal justice for all Iranians. And they deserve a system that guarantees religious freedom, so that they can build a society in which compassion and tolerance prevail.

Today, the Iranian regime denies all these rights. It shuts down independent newspapers and web sites and jails those who dare to challenge the corrupt system. It brutalizes its people and denies them their liberty.

America believes in the independence and territorial integrity of Iran. America believes in the right of the Iranian people to make their own decisions and determine their own future. America believes that freedom is the birthright and deep desire of every human soul. And to the Iranian people, I say: As you stand for your own liberty, the people of America stand with you.

NOTE: The statement referred to President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority.

Proclamation 7911—Father’s Day, 2005

June 16, 2005

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Being a father is a great responsibility and a great joy. From the moment their children are born, fathers face the daily tasks of being mentors, protectors, providers, and friends. Fathers take great pride in watching their children take their first steps, learn to read, and attend their first day of school. On Father’s Day, our Nation honors fathers across

America, and we express our deep gratitude for their selfless love and sacrifices.

Caring, decent, and hardworking fathers give much of themselves. By offering unconditional love and providing guidance and discipline, a father is a source of stability and one of the most important influences on his children. A father’s example helps shape the character and values that his children will carry with them into adulthood, and the lessons he teaches remain with them for a lifetime. By encouraging his sons and daughters to set high standards, work hard, and make good decisions, a father shows his children that they can meet life’s challenges and be good citizens.

Responsible fatherhood is essential to a compassionate society in which all children are surrounded by love and taught the importance of respect, honesty, and integrity. My Administration commends all those who are working to strengthen the bonds between fathers and their children.

On Father’s Day and all year long, we honor our Nation’s fathers and express our love and appreciation for them. We also honor the many proud fathers who are serving our country on the front lines of freedom. We are grateful for their service and sacrifice, and we pray for them and their families. These men have answered a great call, and they set an example of duty and honor for all Americans.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, in accordance with a joint resolution of the Congress approved April 24, 1972, as amended (36 U.S.C. 109), do hereby proclaim June 19, 2005, as Father’s Day. I direct the appropriate officials of the Government to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on this day. I also call upon State and local governments and citizens to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush