

Our Founders thought carefully about the role they wanted judges to play in the American Republic. They decided on a court system that would be independent from political or public pressure, with judges who serve for life. America expects members of our judiciary to be prudent in exercising judicial power and firm in defending judicial independence. So every member of the Supreme Court takes an oath to uphold the Constitution and administer justice faithfully and impartially. This is a solemn responsibility.

And the man we honor today has demonstrated his devotion to our courts and law through years of service to our country. Sam Alito has distinguished himself as a member of our military, a Federal prosecutor, Assistant to the Solicitor General, U.S. Attorney in New Jersey, and for the last 15 years, a highly respected judge on the Third Circuit Court of Appeals.

Sam Alito is known for his steady demeanor, careful judgment, and complete integrity. Throughout his career he has treated others with respect. In return, he has earned the admiration of his colleagues on the bench, the lawyers who have come before it, and, of course, a very devoted group of proud law clerks.

During the confirmation process, the American people saw a man of character and legal brilliance. Like our fellow citizens, I was impressed by the dignity Sam Alito and his family displayed during the Senate hearings, and by the thoughtful scholarship and reverence of the Constitution that have always defined his approach to the law.

A Supreme Court Justice must meet the highest standard of legal excellence, while serving with humility and fidelity to our founding promise of equal justice under the law. These are qualities Americans want in a Supreme Court Justice. These are qualities Americans see in Sam Alito. He will make a superb Justice of the Supreme Court, and I know this son of New Jersey will make all Americans proud.

Sam, I thank you for agreeing to serve our country again and for accepting this new call to duty.

Now I ask the Chief Justice of the United States, John Roberts, to please step forward and administer the oath.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:22 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Cecilia Marshall, wife of former Justice Thurgood Marshall. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Associate Justice Alito.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Spending-Reduction Legislation

February 1, 2006

As I said last night, keeping America competitive requires us to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars. The House today passed a significant spending-reduction package that will curb the growth of entitlement spending for the first time in years and help us stay on track to cut the deficit in half by 2009. I look forward to signing this bill into law. The budget I propose next week will continue to build on the spending restraint we have achieved.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 1932.

Statement on the New Freedom Initiative

February 1, 2006

Five years ago, I announced the New Freedom Initiative to build on the progress of the Americans with Disabilities Act and more fully integrate people with disabilities into all aspects of life. Since the announcement of this important initiative, we have expanded educational opportunities for children with disabilities and provided essential funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. We have launched disabilityinfo.gov to serve as an online resource for people with disabilities and their families, employers, service providers, and other community members. To provide expanded employment opportunities, we are assisting persons with disabilities by implementing the Ticket to Work program and strengthening training and employment services at One-Stop Career Centers.

As a result of these efforts, Americans with disabilities have greater access to the opportunities of America. My administration will

continue to work to remove barriers that still confront Americans with disabilities and their families.

Proclamation 7978—American Heart Month, 2006

February 1, 2006

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

More than 70 million Americans live with some form of heart disease, and this disease remains the leading cause of death in the United States. During American Heart Month, we reinforce our commitment to fighting heart disease by promoting awareness about its risks, its causes, and the ways to reduce the chance of developing this deadly illness.

Many of the factors that lead to heart disease, such as high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, and obesity, can be controlled with commonsense steps and healthy lifestyles. Through the HealthierUS Initiative, my Administration encourages Americans to work toward four simple goals that can lead to a healthy heart: exercise daily; develop good eating habits; avoid tobacco, drugs, and excessive alcohol; and take advantage of preventive screenings to detect problems early.

First Lady Laura Bush helps lead “The Heart Truth” campaign through her Women’s Health and Wellness Initiative. The campaign was launched by business, non-profit, and government organizations, including the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, to educate women about the risks of heart disease and to encourage them to make their cardiovascular health a priority. Along with the American Heart Association’s “Go Red for Women” campaign, these initiatives use the red dress as a symbol to remind women to make healthy choices and talk with their doctors about heart disease.

As a result of the Medicare Modernization Act, our seniors have more choices to prevent, diagnose, and treat potential problems before they become worse. Medicare now covers preventive screenings, a “Welcome to Medicare” physical for new beneficiaries,

and innovative programs to help seniors fight chronic threats. I urge all Medicare beneficiaries to take advantage of these measures as part of a healthy lifestyle.

All Americans can improve their heart health and live longer, better lives by taking an active role in their health care decisions and consulting their physician for the latest information. As we observe American Heart Month, we recognize those battling heart disease; we express gratitude to the family members and friends who are a source of love and encouragement; and we commend the medical professionals and researchers who provide assistance and work to find cures and improve treatments.

In acknowledgement of the importance of the ongoing fight against cardiovascular disease, the Congress, by Joint Resolution approved December 30, 1963, as amended (77 Stat. 843; 36 U.S.C. 101), has requested that the President issue an annual proclamation designating February as “American Heart Month.”

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim February 2006 as American Heart Month, and I invite all Americans to participate in National Wear Red Day on February 3, 2006. I also invite the Governors of the States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, officials of other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and the American people to join me in recognizing and reaffirming our commitment to combating heart disease.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

George W. Bush

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on February 6.