

The original documents are located in Box 37, “8/6/76 - Remarks Urging Congressional Enactment of the Swine Flu Immunization Program” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN...

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT ON SWINE FLU

I HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING WITH GREAT CONCERN THE
INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE CAUSE OF THE TRAGIC OUTBREAK OF ILLNESS
IN PENNSYLVANIA THIS PAST WEEK. ALL AMERICANS JOIN ME,
~~I AM SURE,~~ IN THEIR SYMPATHY FOR THE FAMILIES OF THE MORE THAN
20 PEOPLE WHO HAVE DIED -- AND THEIR HOPE FOR THE SPEEDY
RECOVERY OF THOSE PEOPLE CURRENTLY UNDER TREATMENT.

I AM GREATLY RELIEVED THAT THESE TRAGIC DEATHS WERE NOT
THE RESULT OF SWINE FLU. ~~BUT~~ LET US REMEMBER ONE THING:
THEY COULD HAVE BEEN. THE THREAT OF SWINE FLU OUTBREAK
THIS YEAR IS STILL VERY GENUINE. DATA FROM THE SCIENTIFIC
COMMUNITY STILL CLEARLY SUPPORTS THE NEED FOR A FULL-SCALE
INOCULATION PROGRAM.

CLINICAL TESTS CONDUCTED TO DATE CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE
THAT THE VACCINE IS BOTH SAFE AND EFFECTIVE. THERE IS NO
EXCUSE TO LET THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM THAT I PROPOSED SEVEN WEEKS
AGO - A PROGRAM THAT COULD SAFEGUARD THE LIVES OF MANY,
MANY AMERICANS - BE DELAYED ANY LONGER.

H.E.W. SECRETARY MATHEWS AND THE LEADERS OF CONGRESS
REPORTED TO ME ON WEDNESDAY THAT AFTER LONG HOURS OF HEARINGS,
DISCUSSIONS, AND NEGOTIATIONS, CONGRESS WOULD FINALLY ACT
YESTERDAY TO PASS LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE SWINE FLU VACCINE
TO ALL THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. NEEDLESS TO SAY, I WAS KEENLY
DISAPPOINTED TO LEARN LAST EVENING THAT THE NEWS FROM THE DOCTORS
IN PENNSYLVANIA HAS LED TO ANOTHER SLOWDOWN IN THE CONGRESS.

I AM FRANKLY DUMBFOUNDED THAT CONGRESS, WHICH TOOK
THE TIME AND EFFORT TO ENACT ILL-ADVISED LEGISLATION TO EXEMPT
ITS OWN MEMBERS FROM STATE INCOME TAXES, ^{*certain*} HAS FAILED TO
ACT TO PROTECT 215 MILLION AMERICANS FROM THE THREAT OF
SWINE FLU. DRUG MANUFACTURERS HAVE PRODUCED OVER
100 MILLION DOSES OF SWINE FLU VACCINE IN BULK FORM, BUT
THE VACCINE HAS NOT BEEN PREPARED IN SUITABLE DOSAGE FORM,
PENDING ACTION BY THE CONGRESS.

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BECAUSE OF THESE LEGISLATIVE DELAYS, WE ARE, AT THIS
MOMENT, AT LEAST SIX WEEKS AWAY FROM BEGINNING AN
EFFECTIVE INOCULATION PROGRAM. HAD CONGRESS ACTED
PROMPTLY AFTER I SUBMITTED MY PROPOSAL, WE WOULD HAVE
BEEN IN A POSITION TO DISPATCH SHIPMENTS OF VACCINE TODAY.

FURTHER DELAY ON THIS URGENTLY NEEDED LEGISLATION

IS UNCONSCIONABLE•

I CALL ON THE CONGRESS TO ACT NOW f-

BEFORE ITS NEXT RECESS -- SO THAT THE HEALTH OF THE AMERICAN

PEOPLE WILL BE FULLY PROTECTED•

END OF TEXT

I AM FRANKLY DUMBFUNDED THAT THE CONGRESS HAS FAILED TO ACT IN THE FACE OF SUCH A CLEAR-CUT NEED. DRUG MANUFACTURERS HAVE PRODUCED OVER 100 MILLION DOSES OF SWINE FLU VACCINE IN BULK FORM, BUT THE VACCINE HAS NOT BEEN PREPARED IN SUITABLE DOSAGE FORM, PENDING ACTION BY THE CONGRESS.

BECAUSE OF THESE LEGISLATIVE DELAYS, WE ARE, AT THIS MOMENT, AT LEAST SIX WEEKS AWAY FROM BEGINNING AN EFFECTIVE INOCULATION PROGRAM. HAD CONGRESS ACTED PROMPTLY AFTER I SUBMITTED MY PROPOSAL, WE WOULD HAVE BEEN IN A POSITION TO DISPATCH SHIPMENTS OF VACCINE TODAY.