The original documents are located in Box 42, “11/1/76 - Remarks at Ceremonies Dedicating the Gerald R. Ford Health and Physical Education Complex, Grand Rapids Junior College, Grand Rapids, MI” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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IT IS WONDERFUL TO BE BACK HOME.

AFTER TRAVELLING ALL OVER THIS GREAT COUNTRY -- NOT

JUST IN THE LAST FEW DAYS, BUT IN RECENT MONTHS -- LET ME

REPEAT WHAT I SAID TWO YEARS AGO -- HAPPINESS IS COMING

HOME TO GRAND RAPIDS.
I am honored and I am very deeply touched that the Board of Education has chosen to name this Health and Physical Education Complex after me.

I am especially honored, knowing that the only other person they have chosen to name a building after was a man who inspired and guided me in the earliest days of my career -- Senator Arthur Vandenberg.
I HAVE KNOWN GRAND RAPIDS JUNIOR COLLEGE ALL MY LIFE
AND RESPECTED IT FOR ITS PUBLIC SERVICE AND HIGH ACADEMIC
STANDARDS. TO HAVE MY NAME PERMANENTLY CONNECTED WITH
IT MAKES ME HAPPIER THAN I CAN SAY.

OF COURSE, WHAT IS REALLY IMPORTANT IS NOT THE
NAME ON THIS BUILDING. WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS THE SERVICE
PROVIDED BY THE BUILDING ITSELF -- AND THE SPIRIT IN WHICH
IT WAS BUILT.
THE MARBLE FRIEZE YOU HAVE JUST DEDICATED, BY GRAND RAPIDS JUNIOR COLLEGE'S DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS LUMEN WINTER, IS A HANDSOME PORTRAYAL OF HOW OUR COMMUNITY WAS BORN AND HOW IT GREW.

THE SAME SPIRIT THAT HELPED GRAND RAPIDS TO GROW AND PROSPER, MADE THIS SPORTS COMPLEX POSSIBLE. IT WAS BUILT ALMOST ENTIRELY WITH LOCAL FUNDS, AND I CONGRATULATE YOU FOR THAT.
THIS COMPLEX WILL SERVE GENERATIONS OF OUR CITIZENS.

I HOPE IT WILL HELP THEM ALL TO FIND THE SATISFACTION I HAVE ALWAYS FOUND IN SPORTS.

IT SHOWED ESPECIALLY GREAT FORESIGHT AND CONSIDERATION TO INCLUDE SWIMMING FACILITIES. AS YOU MAY KNOW, WHEN I MOVED FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENCY TO THE PRESIDENCY, I GAINED THE OVAL OFFICE -- BUT I LOST MY SWIMMING POOL.
NOW WE HAVE ONE AT THE WHITE HOUSE -- BUT I HOPE YOU WILL LET ME USE YOURS WHEN I COME TO VISIT.

IN THE LAST FEW DAYS, I HAVE BEEN REMINDED OF WHAT A WISE MAN ONCE SAID -- "YOU WILL NEVER BREAK DOWN IN A SPEECH ON THE DAY WHEN YOU HAVE WALKED TWELVE MILES."
TO ME SPORTS AND EXERCISE ARE AS MUCH A PART OF LIFE AS BREATHING. I HAVE ALWAYS FOUND THEM BOTH A WORTHWHILE DISCIPLINE AND A NECESSARY RELAXATION. I HAVE ALWAYS FELT THAT TO DEVELOP ONE'S MIND BUT NEGLECT ONE'S BODY WAS TO WASTE ONE OF GOD'S MOST PRECIOUS GIFTS.

THIS SPORTS COMPLEX WILL SERVE THE STUDENTS OF GRAND RAPIDS JUNIOR COLLEGE EQUALLY WELL, WHETHER THEY ARE TRAINING FOR COMPETITION OR JUST EXERCISING FOR THEIR OWN ENJOYMENT. IT SHOULD INSPIRE THEM TO STAY PHYSICALLY ACTIVE THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES.
IT SHOULD INSPIRE US ALL TO DEDICATE OURSELVES TO

A STRONG AND HEALTHY AMERICA.

LET US COMMIT OURSELVES TO MAKING AMERICA'S THIRD CENTURY ONE OF INDIVIDUAL FULFILLMENT -- IN MIND AND SPIRIT AND BODY. LET US RESOLVE TO FULFILL OUR POTENTIAL AS INDIVIDUALS -- AS A COMMUNITY -- AND AS A GREAT NATION.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.