

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APRIL 27, 1976

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
UPON SIGNING THE
DRUG MESSAGE

THE OVAL OFFICE

10:15 A.M. EDT

For nearly a year I have been devoting increasing attention to a problem which strikes at the very heart of our national well-being, drug abuse. I have initiated and then endorsed a major study of this issue. I have met with foreign heads of state, Members of Congress and members of my Cabinet to express my deep concern and the need for action, and I have publicly spoken about this as one of the most serious and tragic problems our country faces.

Today I am sending to the Congress a special Message on Drug Abuse which outlines, in very frank terms, the severity of this problem and which proposes definitive steps which must be taken to meet the challenge posed by the worsening drug situation.

I am requesting the Congress to enact specific legislation to improve our ability to put the traffickers who sell drugs into prison. I am also calling for a renewed commitment to a program that balances the law enforcement effort with the provisions of humane and effective treatment for drug users.

Finally, since our ability to control the supply of illegal drugs in this country depends to a very large degree on the interest and the capability of foreign governments in controlling drugs which originate in or move through their territory, I renew this government's commitment to providing support for foreign allies in this fight.

With the combined efforts of the Executive Branch, the Congress, State and local Government and the private sector, we can control drug abuse.

Now that the problem is worsening, we must not shrink from this challenge but rather redouble our efforts at all levels to provide the leadership and resources to reverse the trend.

At this time I will sign the two Messages to the House as well as to the Senate.

END (AT 10:17 A.M. EST)