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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
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Contact: Jennifer Hillings
Tele.: (202) 366-4570

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION ELIZABETH HANFORD DOLE
NATIONAL HAIRDRESSERS AND COSMETOLOGISTS ASSOCIATION
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Someone once wrote that "anyone who keeps the ability to see beauty never grows old." Since its beginning in 1921 this marvelous organization has never lost its ability to see beauty and consequently has never grown old. In fact, you are growing stronger and more vibrant to the tune of 15,000 new members last year alone. You are the voice of the personal grooming profession in America and the bellwether of grassroots public opinion. You are extremely well organized -- you've successfully lobbied on many important consumer issues, and I know that from back in my days at the White House, and in my book, you have one of the most effective lobbying efforts in the country. And I know that there are many, many people who agree with that assessment.

Whether it involves legislation on Capitol Hill or policy at the White House or an issue in one of the Cabinet Departments, your officers do an outstanding job of representing you and the clients you serve. They always let us know where you stand and your opinions are greatly respected.

My own acquaintance with your association goes back more than a decade. When I was Deputy Special Assistant to the President for Consumer Affairs, I had the pleasure of attending your national convention. Robin Weir was one of your leaders then and certainly he, Richard Swinney, Christine Valmy and

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many others who are friends of mine in this organization, keep me informed of your many interests.

It's also a joy for me to be here among so many natural allies in what I like to call America's "quiet revolution," a tidal wave of qualified and talented women who have entered our work force in record numbers over the past three decades. I hope the men in our audience will permit me to divert for just a moment to mention the impact of this change because it affects women in your profession and every woman who uses your services. There is no question that today's "average families" are anything but average. A record 19.5 million mothers with children under the age of 18 were in the U.S. labor force in 1984. And more than three-fifths of all married couples in this country are part of the recent phenomenon called two-income families, or the dual career marriage, a trend that has risen significantly from earlier decades. More than half of all American women now work, a significant difference from 20 years ago. We are seeing a revolutionary change in our society and we probably don't realize how significant it is because we are living it.

I can't help but think back to 1962 when I entered Harvard Law School. I was one of 25 women in a class of 550. That same entering class at Harvard Law School today is almost 35 percent female. The overall ranks of women professionals grew from 4.5 million in 1972 to 7.6 million 10 years later. Now many of you are small business owners. Businesses owned by women are the fastest growing segment of the small business community -- over three million strong, as big as the population of Chicago -- and generating over \$53 billion in receipts. Isn't that fantastic?

The numbers of the past decades speak eloquently of progress. But who among us can argue that we have completely eliminated discrimination, or totally banned that insidious brand of prejudice -- what I call the tyranny of perfection.

Social critic Marya Mannes put it best, I think, when she wrote: "Nobody objects to a woman being a good writer or sculptor or geneticist if, at the same time, she manages to be a good wife, a good mother, good-looking, good-tempered, well-dressed, well-groomed and unaggressive."

We have most certainly not reached the millennium, although we women have made great progress. Many doors have opened to us in the last 25 years, and today, women throughout society are grappling with tough issues -- issues that were once considered men's work. For instance, at the Department of Transportation, I've found my little footnote in history. I am the first woman to head a branch of the armed services -- the U.S. Coast Guard.

Indeed, transportation is a male-dominated industry. You only have to look at the traditional work force in highway construction, shipbuilding, the air traffic control professionals on railroads to realize this --

although we are working to increase the number of women in the transportation fields.

When I arrived at the Department I asked how many women do we have working at this department today. I was told 19 percent. Then I asked, what was the percentage when the Department was established in 1967? You know what the answer was: 18.5 percent. We had come up half a percentage point from 1967 to 1983. So we quickly put together a task force and we worked up a 10 point program with the help of the women at the Department. And we have been helping more women to enter at the entry level, to move up the ladder and refine their skills. Of course when you have 100,000 employees it takes a lot of people to move up even one point. And I know the program is working in that we are now at almost 23 percent female. I also know its working because recently a pilot flew into a major city and he told me "I was really amazed." He said "there were three distinct voices on the air traffic control system. All three were female voices." "I said great, our program is working."

All around us women are making choices -- their choices --based on family needs and their needs. Indeed, women in the 1980s comprise a diverse group with varied interests. Some seek their own careers in business. Some run for political office. Others focus on the home and family. And some seek to do all these things. In today's society, no role is superior to another, although I don't believe there is a more challenging career than that of homemaker and mother. What's important is that every woman has the right and the opportunity to choose the role that she wishes.

And I have certainly found that whatever the choice, good grooming and career in taking care of oneself plays a very important role in career success, in career satisfaction, and fulfillment. I have always believed that being oneself is crucial. In other words, a woman does not have to make herself over in the image of a man to be successful. Her femininity is an asset. And that means allowing time for good health habits -- a regular exercise program, a balanced diet, hair and and skin care. I've found that feeling good about oneself can greatly impact one's enthusiasm and energy level and thus one's success on the job.

I have to share just one little experience with you in this category. The President named the month of May as physical fitness month and I was told that I should give an address to the DOT employees on physical fitness month. I decided there was only one way to handle this --to go forward, speak to the employees and make a public confession and a public commitment. So I went up to the gym which is on the next floor just above my office for the first time in three years. And you know what I discovered up there? That the President's Commission on Physical Fitness has named the Department of Transportation's program as one of the three best in the United States either public or private. So I made my speech saying today was the first day I had been in the gym and I'm now going to make a commitment. I'm going to be up there doing aerobic exercises three days a week and I want the rest of you to join me.

Now, in meeting and talking with hairdressers and cosmetologists --both men and women in the profession -- I am always struck first by their highly motivated desire to make a difference in the political process, to make a difference, a positive difference for people. And today I want to visit with you a little about my own career in service to the public.

When people ask me why I choose to work in the public sector, I tell them that -- for me -- one of the greatest satisfactions in life is the opportunity to face challenging issues, to help shape policies that affect us as a nation, and most of all, to make that difference, that positive difference, in people's lives. And let me assure you, even in an institution as big as government, the individual very definitely does count. One vote can make a difference in an election; one voice an impact on public policy. Often I have seen one well thought out suggestion or idea start the wheels of government turning. And I could name you any number of examples from my days at the Federal Trade Commission as well as in my current position. And conversely, I have seen more than once, one well-reasoned, well-documented argument stop government from pursuing a particular planned course of action. So the individual voice or the association's voice can very definitely make a difference.

In my area, transportation is an \$800 billion industry, which accounts for 20 percent of our Gross National Product. My department alone has a \$28 billion budget. We have 100,000 employees, and our responsibilities, quite literally, cover everything that moves. And of course the carriage of goods and products is very important to you.

I have made safety across all modes of transportation my highest priority as Secretary of Transportation because I do want to make that difference for people. If you have a limited time to serve in a job such as this obviously it's going to be important to try to leave a legacy of better organization. For example, we are trying to get the federal government out of the railroad business by selling our freight railroad which has been profitable now for five years.

I'm hoping before the year is over to transfer two airports out of the federal government. They are the only two in the country run by the federal government and there's no way to go forward to get the kind of improvements they need at National and Dulles unless they are put on a different funding basis like other airports so they can have revenue bonds.

We are hoping to complete trucking deregulation and we want to go forward with a number of other initiatives.

We have no major plan in the United States or internationally to handle a major oil spill. If we can get the Senate to vote this year --and I believe we can --we will put into place before the year is out a system which would provide insurance up to \$200 million worth against any major oil spill. This would mean the cleanup costs would be paid for and also compensation to those who have been damaged by the spill. That would more

than cover any major spill we've had in this country. These are the kinds of challenging issues we face in transportation. This afternoon at 2 o'clock we will be discussing the problem of drugs in this country at a Cabinet Council meeting. And then on Thursday we will be looking at the 55-mile-an-hour speed limit and all the pluses and some people feel some minuses. Then we will be talking about space before the week is over and the future of our space program -- the fourth orbiter. What about the private sector having an opportunity to grow and thrive if they are given a chance at this point to develop and provide launch services for space? So there are so many interesting and challenging issues but none more important in the limited time you can serve in a position like this than the safety issues across all modes. I'm a great advocate of deregulation. I believe it is working very well across all our transportation industries and it gives you, the consumer lower prices. We are able to get the shipping rates down because there's more competition in a deregulated climate but let me assure you that we are not going to permit safety to be diminished as we move forward with deregulation in our transportation modes.

And within the area of safety, our biggest challenge is certainly on our nation's highways, where 93 percent of transportation fatalities occur and where approximately 44,000 Americans lost their lives last year. Last year we had the lowest fatality rate of any year. And we had a 25 percent drop over five years in the number of people killed in traffic fatalities who were intoxicated. So the numbers are looking better, but still with 44,000 deaths last year our work is cut out for us.

We are working to enhance safety in three ways -- from three perspectives on our highways. First of all, we are repairing our roads and bridges. Back at the end of 1982 a milestone piece of legislation was passed called the Surface Transportation Assistance Act, that literally doubled on average the amount of money going to the states for repair of our infrastructure, our roads and bridges which was tremendously needed and long overdue. I now have before the Senate as we speak a highway reauthorization bill which we hope to get through this year and that will provide about the same level of funding for repair of infrastructure. A number of bills are being discussed but the principles in many instances are the same as the bill that was sent to the Congress by the Administration. We will continue our commitment to repair the infrastructure.

The second part of that three-pronged approach is the design of the vehicle itself. Those of you who have gotten new cars this year have a high-mounted stop light which we required at the base of the rear window on all new cars. Over five years of study of police fleets and taxi fleets showed us that approximately 900,000 accidents a year can be prevented once all cars are equipped with that one little light. It's a very cost effective device. It costs very little and yet it's going to have quite an impact. It will also eliminate almost \$500 million in property damage every year.

The third element: the behavior of the driver. Ten years ago many people winked at drunk drivers. Today drunk driving has become socially unacceptable behavior. Americans today are no longer willing to tolerate lax laws and lenient judges when it comes to drunk driving offenses. And it's been my privilege to work with so many people who are committed to getting drunk drivers off our highways. Many are volunteers, women like Candy Lightner, founder of MADD -- Mothers Against Drunk Driving -- and young people in SADD -- Students Against Drunk Driving -- and my favorite, BADD -- Bartenders Against Drunk Driving. President Reagan personally supported and signed into law a bill that encourages the states to set 21 as their legal minimum drinking age. We normally defer to states on traffic law issues, but the president called me on this and he said "Elizabeth, I can't answer the question of the blood border." This is where a state with age 21 has a neighbor state with a lower drinking age, a positive incentive for young people to cross that state line, drink and come back "under the influence." So for that reason he felt that there should be federal incentives which means that this fall if a state has not passed on age 21 drinking law we will withhold a portion of their highway funds. At the point that they pass the law we will release their funds. So there is more than a slight incentive here to get the states to take some action.

And, of course, the best defense against the drunk driver is the safety belt. The regulation we put into place summer before last, almost two years ago now -- Rule 208 -- has spawned safety belt laws in 26 states and the District of Columbia. And I hope those of you who are from the states that have the new law feel that it is effective. There is no question that it is saving lives.

In the area of railroad safety, for 12 years there was an effort to put a rule into place to address the serious problem of drinking and drugs on our railroads. And I am very proud that three months ago that rule was put into effect. Now, I'm being sued but I'm sure we are going to win the case because it was the right thing to do. It breaks the silence. In other words, if an employee who has a drinking or drug problem report himself or a co-worker with a problem, they can get rehabilitation. He's not automatically fired. He has one "bite at the apple," one chance to be rehabilitated. And I hope that this is going to save a lot of lives and make a real difference because obviously trains sometimes loaded with hazardous material are traveling through our communities and we want to be absolutely certain that those who are operating those trains are free of alcohol and drug abuse problems.

Now, there has been a lot of concern recently because international commercial aviation in 1985 experienced its highest number of fatalities in a single year -- 1,622 people lost their lives. Seventy percent of those fatalities occurred in accidents on foreign airlines, and over 50 percent were in the crashes of Japan Air Lines, which took down 520 people and Air India, where we suspect sabotage had 329 people aboard. We have found no common thread in the causes of last year's tragic accidents. Obviously, the rate this year has been far better but last year did represent

internationally the highest number. We do have the safest system in the world, the best air traffic control system, and federal regulations that are patterned after by the entire world. But that doesn't mean we are not doing everything in our power to make the safest system in the world ever safer. And we have many initiatives under way in that respect.

We are increasing the number of air traffic controllers by a thousand. We are increasing the number of inspectors. I brought it to the high water mark of FAA history back in 1984. But now we are going beyond that because with deregulation and so many people flying who never thought they'd have the means to fly until the rates dropped, there is so much we are going to have to do to prepare for more and more traffic. That means expanding the numbers as we have done with regard to inspectors and air traffic controllers. We will continue to watch that as we move forward and monitor it very carefully. We have a plan under way now. It's about a \$12 billion plan that's going to save us far more than that, that will modernize our air space system, take us to the highest levels of automation and enable us to double our capacity in the air by the year 2000.

Each day in the U. S., some 15,000 scheduled flights carry an average of one million passengers, and 99.999 percent of these flights reach their destination without so much as a minor operational error. However, even one accident is one too many and I assure you that we will continually strive to make the safest system in the world.

Whether it's safety or the economy or women's issues, we still have big challenges ahead of us, some tough choices, and more change.

A few years ago in Newport Beach, California, there were some lovely beachfront homes that were threatened by an abnormally high tide and heavy surf -- homes in danger of total destruction. And all through a cold winter day and night, volunteers worked filling and piling sandbags in an effort to save the homes. About 2 o'clock in the morning a newscaster grabbed a young fellow in his teens, attired only in wet trunks. Along with several hundred other people, he'd been working day and night. No, he told the reporter, he didn't live in one of those homes they were trying to save. Yes, he was cold and tired. Why then, were he and his friends doing this, the reporter wanted to know. The young man stopped for a minute and then he answered, "well, I guess it's the first time we ever felt like we were needed."

You are needed. I am needed. We may serve in some official capacity. We may serve through private enterprise -- influencing neighbors and informing business associates on an issue. We may also serve effectively as volunteers. Certainly, you are in a unique position to serve, and to make that difference for people. You have a close relationship, a very close relationship with each of your clients and the influence you have is immense.

There are no limits on the good you can do and the impact you can have in so many areas, for example, our safety campaign. And I would like you to

think about it because by word of mouth so much can be conveyed and so much can happen. And I need your help. If I leave you with no other message today, let it be this: You influence public opinion in a strong and very personal way, both through your individual contacts and as an organization and very effective, well organized, advocates in the issues you bring before Congress and the White House. Please join me in this safety campaign and together we will make a difference. I ask you to take these messages to your clients: seat belts do save lives, encourage everyone to "buckle up," join us in our fight against driving drunk. We must not stop until we get every last drunk driver off the roads and highways of this country; and while there's no easy answer to the drug problem we must do all we can to stop this invasion on our society. U.S. News and World Report said recently that Americans consume 60 percent of the worlds production of illegal drugs; sales of \$100 billion annually, more than the net sales of GM, more than the American farmer takes in from all crops. So it is a very serious problem.

I think of something that President Reagan said. He recalled how he first learned to deal with stress as the newly elected governor of California. And, he said, "each morning began with someone standing before my desk describing yet another newly discovered disaster. The feeling of stress became unbearable. I had the urge to look over my shoulder for someone I could pass the problem to. Suddenly, one day it came to me that I was looking in the wrong direction. I looked up instead of back, and I'm still looking up. I couldn't face another day in this office if I didn't know I could ask God's help and it would be given."

And, ladies and gentlemen, I agree with that statement. I think that's what it takes in this day and age with the challenges that we all face.

Words like unachievable, unattainable, impossible and unimaginable have never been a part of the American vocabulary. And it shows. Your success not only speaks well of the American system, it strengthens it. I congratulate you and urge you to keep it up.

One of the greatest of American women was Helen Keller, an inspiration to millions over the years. Helen Keller's philosophy of life can be summed up in a single sentence, "One can never consent to creep when one feels an impulse to soar." Obviously, you are already soaring. May I wish you every success, collectively and individually.

Thank you very much and God bless you all.

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