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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Vice President

**For Immediate Release
Tuesday, August 10, 1999**

**Contact:
202-456-7035**

**VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE JOINS TOUR DE FRANCE CHAMPION LANCE
ARMSTRONG TO ANNOUNCE NEW PROGRESS IN CANCER RESEARCH**

Washington DC -- Vice President Al Gore today -- joined by cancer survivor and Tour de France Champion Lance Armstrong, the Postmaster General, and other cancer survivors -- announced important new strides in cancer research and underscored that more needs be done.

"Lance Armstrong's remarkable story is testament to the courage and strength of will shown by all cancer patients," said Vice President Al Gore. "We must keep working to fight this disease, and to give more people the hope that they, like Lance Armstrong, will have the chance to fulfill their greatest dreams."

On the second anniversary of the Cancer Genome Anatomy Project (CGAP), a historic research effort he launched in 1997, Vice President Gore announced today that over 30,000 human genes have been identified, more than double the original goals; and announced that a new record number of Americans -- 8.4 million -- have survived cancer.

"This project is working to identify every major gene that predisposes someone to cancer," Vice President Gore said. "It has the potential to revolutionize diagnosis and treatment, based on this simple principle: if we crack the enemy's code, we can win the war."

The Vice President also announced the development of "Insight Awards to Stamp Out Breast Cancer," a new innovative breast cancer research program that uses funding from the over one hundred million stamps sold in the first year of the historic Breast Cancer Research stamp.

Specifically, the Vice President Gore announced:

- **A NEW DIRECTIVE TO THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT TO LOOK INTO THE ADVISABILITY OF GIVING FEDERAL EMPLOYEES TIME OFF FOR CANCER AND OTHER PREVENTIVE SCREENINGS.**

The Vice President Al Gore highlighted an innovative program implemented by Mayor Menino that gives city employees in Boston four hours off each year encouraging them to get cancer screenings. Today, Vice President Al Gore directed the Office of Personnel Management to look into advisability and feasibility of implementing this type of approach for the Federal workforce to encourage cancer and other preventive screenings. He asked Director Janice LaChance to report back within 90 days. The Vice President underscored that this will not only help encourage the 1.8 million Federal employees get these tests but set a model for the private sector as well.

- **MORE THAN \$4 MILLION DEDICATED TO NEW RESEARCH PROGRAM FUNDED BY THE BREAST CANCER STAMP.**

This July marked the one-year anniversary for the Breast Cancer Research stamp, the nation's first postage stamp that designates a portion of its proceeds to a charitable cause. The Vice President highlighted that already more than one hundred million Breast Cancer Research stamps have been sold nationwide, generating more than \$7.8 million for breast cancer research. Vice President Gore announced that today \$4 million is being dedicated to the National Cancer Institute's new "Insight Awards to Stamp Out Breast Cancer", an innovative program that will fund progressive pilot studies for extensive breast cancer research.

- **UNPRECEDENTED PROGRESS IN NUMBER OF CANCER GENES DISCOVERED BY THE CANCER GENOME ANATOMY PROJECT (CGAP).**

Two years ago this month, Vice President Gore launched the Cancer Genome Anatomy Project, a historic project to identify every major gene that predisposes people to cancer which has the potential to revolutionize diagnosis and treatment. Today, the Vice President announced that CGAP has already discovered nearly 30,000 new human genes and catalogued over 40,500 that are active directly or indirectly, in one or more cancers. The Vice President also reiterated his challenge to scientists to identify every cancer-related gene by 2002.

- **MORE AMERICANS HAVE SURVIVED CANCER THAN EVER BEFORE.**

Vice President Gore announced that today the National Cancer Institute is releasing new information citing a record number of Americans – 8.4 million -- have survived cancer. Between the early 1980's and the early 1990's, the five-year survival rate for all cancers improved from 51 percent to almost 60 percent, and the five-year survival rate for children with cancer improved from 65 percent to 74 percent. However, the Vice President underscored that there is still much progress to be made. Each year 1.3 million Americans are diagnosed with cancer, and 560,000 will die from it. Forty percent of all Americans will get cancer and 20 percent will die from it.

- **CALLED ON CONGRESS TO TAKE STEPS RIGHT AWAY TO HELP CANCER PATIENTS.**

Vice President Gore called on Congress to pass legislation this year that can help cancer patients including legislation that: assures Medicare beneficiaries can participate in cancer clinical trials; protects medical privacy; eliminates genetic discrimination, and provides for a strong, comprehensive, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights.

- **UNDERScoreD THAT THE REPUBLICAN TAX CUT WOULD LEAD TO DEVASTATING DECREASES IN BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH.**

The Vice President underscored the need for major increases in cancer research and highlighted that the tax cut proposed by the Republicans would cause research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to be cut by over \$10 billion by 2009, a step that would clearly slow down the fight against cancer.

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