

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

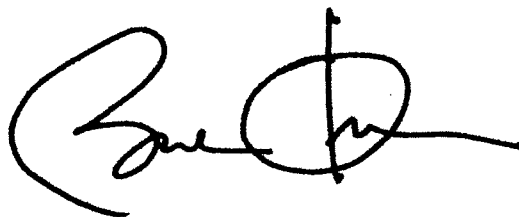
May 19, 2009

I extend my warmest greetings to all those recognizing World Hepatitis Day. Your commitment to public health is evident in your ongoing work to raise awareness and take action against this life-threatening illness.

Hepatitis infects millions of Americans, can lead to painful symptoms and—in far too many cases—can cause death from related diseases. For many people, hepatitis often goes undetected and becomes increasingly difficult to treat over time.

Public awareness and preventative care are crucial to reducing the impact of hepatitis on Americans. With accurate and timely knowledge, individuals can undergo effective screening and testing. Together, we can also provide support and care for those infected, and aspire to eliminate this terrible disease. To achieve these goals and care for the many Americans suffering from diseases like hepatitis, comprehensive reform of our health care system is essential. That is one of many reasons why I am committed to enacting healthcare reform legislation this year.

As we mark World Hepatitis Day, I commend all those who are supporting people with hepatitis, and helping to improve treatment and prevention. I wish you every success as you continue this important mission.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Barack Obama", written in a cursive style.