NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: THOM WILBORN
(202) 724-0088, EXT. 251

JFK ASSASSINATION RECORDS REVIEW BOARD INITIATES STEPS, ENLISTS PARTICIPATION OF CONGRESS, IN MAKING ZAPRUDER FILM A PERMANENT PUBLIC RECORD

The Assassination Records Review Board, an independent Federal agency, today unanimously approved a Statement of Policy and Intent that takes the first steps in making the Abraham Zapruder film of the assassination of President Kennedy a part of the permanent JFK Collection at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in College Park, Maryland. The Review Board indicated that it intended to direct that the film become U.S. property on August 1, 1998 and would work closely with the U.S. Congress.

"By taking this action, the Review Board is attempting to insure the preservation of the original Zapruder film, guarantee its availability to the American people, and give the U.S. Congress a role in resolving the final disposition of the film," said Judge John R. Tunheim, Chairman of the Review Board and U.S. District Court Judge for the District of Minnesota. "The members of the Review Board believe it is important that the public have free and unfettered access to this film at a reasonable cost."

The Review Board, in a five to nothing vote today, approved the Statement of Policy and Intent that states:

- The Zapruder film is recognized as an "assassination record" within the meaning of the JFK Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992;
- The Review Board intends to work with Congress to exercise its authority under the JFK Act to direct that the film be transferred to the JFK Assassination Records Collection on August 1, 1998;
- The Review Board will do all in its power to ensure that the best available copy of the Zapruder film will become available to the public at the lowest reasonable price; and
- The Review Board will continue to work cooperatively with LMH Company to (a) make the best possible copy of the Zapruder film to be placed in NARA for scholarly and research uses, (b) to establish a base reference for the film through digitization, and (c) to conduct all appropriate tests to evaluate authenticity and to elicit historical and evidentiary evidence.

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The 8 mm film taken by Abraham Zapruder on Nov. 22, 1963 is considered the best photographic record of the assassination of President Kennedy. It was purchased by Time-Life, Inc. immediately after the assassination and sold back to the family in 1975. The family placed the film in NARA custody in 1978, where it has been kept under stringent preservation conditions.

The Review Board was established by the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act, which was signed into law by President George Bush. The five members of the Board were appointed by President Clinton, confirmed by the U.S. Senate and sworn in on April 11, 1994. The law gives the Review Board the mandate and the authority to identify, secure and make available all records related to the assassination of President Kennedy. It is the responsibility of the Board to determine which records are to be made public immediately and which ones will have postponed release dates.

The Review Board consists of five members:

The Honorable John R. Tunheim, Chair, United States District Court Judge for the District of Minnesota

Dr. Henry F. Graff, Professor Emeritus of History at Columbia University

Dr. Kermit L. Hall, Dean, College of Humanities, and Professor of History and Law at The Ohio State University

Dr. William L. Joyce, Associate University Librarian for Rare Books and Special Collections at Princeton University

Dr. Anna K. Nelson, Distinguished Adjunct Historian in Residence at The American University.