

Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on Transmittal of Appropriations Requests to the Congress *September 15, 1992*

The President today announced his intention to transmit to the Congress budget amendments for the Department of Defense that would reallocate \$250 million of the Department's FY 1993 request to Defense advanced-technology programs. The reallocated funds would be used in the areas of communications, high performance computers, small satellites, sensors to identify environmental contamination, and manufacturing technology. These areas are essential to national security and also have dual-use civilian applications. The funds for these advanced-technology programs would be reallocated from lower priority Defense programs.

Appropriations language was also re-

quested to increase the United States FY 1993 contribution to the Asian Development Bank by \$25.5 million. This additional contribution is necessary to maintain United States voting parity with Japan in the Bank. The increased FY 1993 budget authority for the contribution to the Bank would be fully offset by a reduction in the United States contribution to the Asian Development Fund.

The President also transmitted an FY 1992 supplemental appropriations request for the legislative branch. As required by law, appropriations requests for the legislative branch must be transmitted without change.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters on Family Leave Legislation *September 16, 1992*

The President. One of the things we're going to be talking about here today is family leave. I am very proud of what we have already accomplished for families. We all know the issues on that. We have a child care plan that puts the power in the hands of families and parents, not bureaucrats. We let the family choose their child care and not the Government. We should provide an equally flexible approach to family and medical leave.

I favor family and medical leave, always have. But the real question is how do we achieve that goal? Now the Democrats are sending me a bill. It's been timed for politics. They've been sitting on it for a whole year. It takes one different—approach different from ours.

Unfortunately, they and my opponent believe in a Government-dictated mandate that increases costs and loses jobs. Every Governor that comes in here says, "Please don't create more mandates." But now

they're sending me a mandated program.

Our alternative is to provide a family-oriented solution in the form of a tax credit for small and medium-sized businesses. Our approach both encourages companies to adopt family leave policies and gives them the flexibility to target the specific needs of their employees.

My tax credit approach, and we have it in a bill, has another great big advantage. The Democrat bill covers only businesses with more than 50 employees, leaving out the millions of employees of small firms, those the least likely to get leave. Our solution would provide an incentive to all small and medium-sized companies to provide this important benefit. So, in fact, I think our approach has a broader coverage and includes those most in need.

So I would like to suggest if people are really interested in getting family leave done, and I am, that the Democratic leader-

ship go to work on this. It can be done very, very quickly, and it will not cause a loss of jobs, something that concerns me very much in this small-business arena. We're trying to help small business, not mandate them so that, whether they want to or not, they have to lay people off.

So I would like to see immediate action on this. There's an awful lot of politics at play here. But here's an approach that for those that want family leave can do it; those who are opposed to mandates, as I am and many, many other people are across this country, they can support this very nicely.

So that's where we'd like—

Q. Mr. President, do you know how much it would cost and how would you pay for it?

The President. Well, we're going to be discussing that with the leaders. There are some \$60 billion that OMB knows about where we can allocate to this. But that has to all be negotiated out, depending on the size of it and all.

Q. So you are going to veto the bill?

The President. Well, I've sent a veto signal for a long, long time on this. It's just odd that now, after a year up there, it shows up down here 2 weeks before the adjournment of this session. I find that very peculiar

and highly political.

So I'll stay with my past position here. If there's some last minute compromise that can be worked out on existing legislation, fine. I don't see it. Our people, Nick Calio and all, have been struggling very hard to try to get something done on family leave that is not a mandate. And therein lies the key.

Q. You didn't offer this bill the last time you vetoed family leave.

The President. Well, we've been trying to work with the Congress to try to get something done. Now here's a clean approach that those who really want family leave should take a look at.

Thank you. Hey, listen, I've got to go to work here. Thank you all very much.

Q. Are you going to be in Lansing on Tuesday?

The President. I don't know where I'm going to be Tuesday. That's a long way away.

Note: The President spoke at 8:15 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House prior to a meeting with Republican congressional leaders. In his remarks, he referred to Nicholas E. Calio, Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs.

Message to the Congress Transmitting Proposed Family Leave Tax Credit Legislation

September 16, 1992

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit for your immediate consideration and enactment the "Family Leave Tax Credit Act of 1992". This flexible family leave plan will enable 80 percent of the workplaces in the country—the small and mid-sized businesses that often cannot provide family leave—to provide family leave for their employees without costing jobs or stifling economic growth. The proposal will cover 15 million more workers, and 20 times as many workplaces, than the proposals in S. 5.

This legislation will provide a refundable tax credit for up to 20 percent of total com-

pensation, for up to \$100 a week—to a maximum of \$1,200—for businesses that provide their employees with 12 weeks of family leave. An employee would be eligible to take leave under the following circumstances: the birth of a child, the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care, care for a child, parent, or spouse with a serious health condition, or a serious health condition that prevents the employee from performing his or her job.

This is not federally mandated leave. It instead gives employers positive incentives to adopt responsible family leave policies