

with in our security relationship, but it's still fundamentally strong. And I have the greatest respect for the nation and for its people, and I think all of us know that a strong U.S.-Japan relationship is critical for the world as we move into the 21st century.

So I called Prime Minister Murayama; we had a very good talk. I have already talked to two of the other APEC leaders, President Kim of South Korea, and President Soeharto of Indonesia. I expect at least to talk to the President of China, perhaps some others before the meeting. The Vice President is going to the meeting, and then we'll have a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Murayama. So we're determined to keep this relationship on track.

I assured him that my absence from Japan has nothing to do with our relationship or my importance—the importance to which that I attach to it. So I think we'll be fine. But we need to—when you say you're going to go visit your neighbor and you have to cancel the visit, you have to reschedule and show up. And I intend to do it.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 106th news conference began at 3 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama of Japan; President Kim Yong-sam of South Korea; and President Jiang Zemin of China.

Statement on Signing the Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1996

November 16, 1995

Last night I signed into law H.R. 2002, the "Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1996."

I urge the Congress to complete action on the remaining regular FY 1996 appropriations bills and to send them to me in acceptable form. Last year, the Congress had sent me—and I had signed—all 13 appropriations bills by September 30. Regrettably, this is only the fourth bill that I have been able to sign for this fiscal year. The Congress has failed to send to me the bills that fund over 88 percent of the discretionary programs of our Government.

The Act provides \$36.9 billion in new budgetary resources for programs of the Department of Transportation and several smaller agencies. The bill is consistent with my request in most key areas.

I am particularly pleased that the Congress heeded my calls to increase funding for the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA's) safety programs over what the Congress had originally proposed. The FAA manages the world's largest and safest aviation system. Nevertheless, Secretary Pena and FAA Administrator Hinson are working to make it safer, both for today and the future. The bill's FAA personnel and procurement reforms, which the Vice President's National Performance Review first proposed,

will contribute greatly to that effort. I encourage the Congress to move quickly on the rest of my comprehensive FAA reform package.

The FAA personnel and procurement reforms contained in the Act will contribute greatly to our safety effort. They permit the FAA to improve its hiring, training, compensation, and relocation practices to better meet its unique personnel needs. They also allow for streamlined contracting practices that will speed up the deployment of new technologies into the field. Both new systems will be developed with the participation of the aviation community, including FAA employees and their representatives. They will build upon, not diminish or redefine, FAA's current beneficial management-labor relationship. While we embrace the FAA personnel and procurement reforms in the Act, we will work with the Congress to ensure that personnel reforms enacted pursuant to any FAA reform legislation must be designed and implemented in consultation with FAA unions, consistent with their continuing role as the representatives of these key members of the Federal workforce.

I am also pleased that the Act provides the fast-track reorganization authority for the Department of Transportation, as I requested, because it will improve service while cutting costs to taxpayers. Secretary Pena and I look forward

to working with the Congress as we reform and streamline the Department.

The Act provides funding for most of the Department's high-priority programs. I commend the Congress for not including new earmarked highway demonstration projects; States can better use these funds in determining their transportation infrastructure priorities.

I am disappointed that the Congress did not authorize the restructuring of transportation infrastructure programs, as I proposed, but I look forward to maintaining a dialogue with the Congress about how to best meet States' and local-

ities' needs for flexibility to address their future, high-priority transportation needs.

Again, I urge the Congress to meet its responsibilities by sending me the remaining regular FY 1996 appropriations bills in acceptable form.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 16, 1995.

NOTE: H.R. 2002, approved November 15, was assigned Public Law No. 104-50.

Message to the Congress Transmitting Proposed Legislation To Compensate Furloughed Federal Government Employees November 16, 1995

To the Congress of the United States:

In declaring my intention to disapprove House Joint Resolution 122, the further continuing resolution for fiscal year 1996, I stated my desire to approve promptly a clean extension of the continuing resolution that expired on November 13. Accordingly, I am forwarding the enclosed legislation that would provide for such an extension. This legislation also provides that all Federal employees furloughed during the Government shutdown through no fault of their

own will be compensated at their ordinary rate for the period of the furlough.

I urge the Congress to act on this legislation promptly and to return it to me for signing.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 16, 1995.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 17.

Interview With NHK Television of Japan November 17, 1995

President's Trip to Japan

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President, for joining us. The Japanese people are greatly disappointed that you have suddenly canceled your visit to Japan. Was it really inevitable?

The President. Yes, it was inevitable. And let me begin by saying that I am greatly disappointed, more disappointed perhaps than I can even convey to you and through you to the Japanese people, to cancel this trip. My first overseas trip as President was to Japan. One of the first actions I took as President was to try to elevate the Asian Pacific Economic Council to a leaders meeting so that we could all

work more closely together throughout Asia. And I have had many, many meetings and telephone calls with not only Prime Minister Murayama but his predecessors. When I ran for President, I said the Japanese-American relationship was of supreme importance to the United States. And so I am very, very disappointed.

But I would ask the Japanese people to understand what is happening here. We are having a debate here which will have great implications for the United States for decades to come. And our Government is closed down for the first time in history for this length of time. This is unprecedented. So that if I were to leave