

May 6 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1996

families and give more children what every child in America deserves—loving parents and a healthy home. This legislation will help children in need of adoptive homes to be united with devoted parents.

My Administration has worked hard to promote adoption in general, and adoption of children with special needs in particular. We championed the Family and Medical Leave Act which enables parents to take time off to adopt a child without losing their jobs or their health insurance. We strongly supported the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act to help increase the number of adoptions by prohibiting discrimination based on race or ethnicity, and we remain committed to enforcing that law vigorously. As part of our 1993 deficit reduction package, I signed into law a provision that requires ERISA plans to provide the same health coverage for adopted children as for biological children of plan participants. We have worked to preserve Federal support for adoption of children with special needs, and increased by 60 percent the number of children with special needs who have been adopted with Federal adoption assistance.

But together we can and must do more. I strongly support the adoption tax credit in this bill. It will alleviate a significant barrier to adoption and allow middle class families, for whom adoption may be prohibitively expensive, to adopt children to love and nurture. It will encourage adoption of children with special needs. It will put parents seeking to build a family

through adoption on a more equal footing with other families.

I believe that the bill is consistent with the Administration's policy and my longstanding goal to end the historical bias against interracial adoptions, which too often has meant interminable waits for children to be matched with parents of the same race. The Administration also has some concerns regarding some of the provisions used to offset the cost of the bill and would like to work with the Congress on these provisions. In addition, we need to ensure that unnecessary provisions are not included in the legislation.

The Adoption Promotion and Stability Act is an important first step toward meeting the challenge of removing barriers to adoption. I look forward to working with you so that the dreams of the waiting children in this country to have permanent homes and loving families can become a reality.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard K. Armey, House majority leader; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; and Bill Archer, chairman, and Sam Gibbons, ranking member, House Committee on Ways and Means. This letter was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 6 but was not issued as a White House press release.

Statement on the Death of William Colby *May 6, 1996*

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of former Director of Central Intelligence William Colby. Through a quarter century at the CIA, William Colby played a pivotal role in shaping our Nation's intelligence community. A dedicated public servant, he ably led the Agency through challenging times. He made

tough decisions when necessary, and he was always guided by the core values of the country he loved. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends in this time of sorrow and grieving.