

effort to preserve the environment in a way that will permit us to grow the economy as an essential component of our national security in the 21st century.

Last year we were fighting about efforts to weaken our most basic safeguards for clean air, clean water, safe food. Now we see a bipartisan public commitment to the public health. This is an area where we stand on common ground. And as a people, we should continue to stand on common ground.

I want to compliment the Congress for the work that was done in this last week, moving people from welfare to work, raising the minimum wage, helping small businesses, passing health care reform, making this effort to safeguard our food. Last night Congress passed strong legislation to help keep our drinking water safe. This has been a very good season

of progress, turning away from extremism toward common ground, around opportunity, responsibility, and community. I am very pleased. I thank the Members of Congress here for their leadership. And I thank the American people, and especially those here represented, for making this day happen.

We're going to do the bill signing now, and I want to invite the children who have come from around the country here to come up and the Members of Congress to come up for the bill signing.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. H.R. 1627, approved August 3, was assigned Public Law No. 104-170.

Statement on Signing the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996

August 3, 1996

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 1627, the "Food Quality Protection Act of 1996," which brings much needed reform to laws governing pesticides and food safety.

Americans have every right to expect that the world's most bountiful food supply will also be the world's safest. Early in my Administration I set out to strengthen our pesticide and food safety laws. This Act achieves that goal with commonsense regulatory reform based on the best available science.

The Act will replace conflicting and outdated pesticide residue standards with a single, rigorous health-based standard for all food. All pesticides will be required to meet the new standard. Incentives are also provided for swift approval of safe, new pesticide alternatives for farmers.

Most importantly, H.R. 1627 contains special new provisions to protect America's infants and children from pesticide risks. These protections will guarantee that every family in America has the safest food possible on their dinner table.

This Act demonstrates how the Congress and the Administration can work together to help both farmers and consumers, and I am pleased to sign it into law.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
August 3, 1996.

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