

ing the White House. In contrast to the Congressional Accountability Act, however, most of these 11 workplace laws already apply to EOP employees, as a matter of law or policy. This Act will, therefore, have a less dramatic impact than the Congressional Accountability Act on the employees it protects. Nevertheless, it is still a welcome broadening of existing protections.

There were three principles that guided my Administration in announcing support for H.R. 3452 shortly after it was introduced.

First, the Nation's leaders should abide by the same laws that the people must follow.

Second, such laws must not infringe on basic constitutional principles, including separation of powers. The Congress apparently shared this concern when it enacted the Congressional Accountability Act.

Third, there must be balance, or symmetry, between the separate branches of Government. The same laws should be applied to the separate branches of Government in the same way, insofar as is practicable and constitutional.

While supporting the principles in H.R. 3452, my Administration expressed serious practical and constitutional concerns about specific provisions in earlier versions of the bill. These included a provision that, perhaps inadvertently, would have eliminated the White House Volun-

teer Program, and another provision that the Department of Justice advised would have unconstitutionally infringed upon the President's appointment powers under the Constitution. I am pleased that, working closely with Members of Congress in both the House and Senate, great strides were taken to address each of these important concerns.

In signing H.R. 3452, I am particularly gratified that it extends, as a matter of law, the protections of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to White House employees. I took steps after the passage of the FMLA to apply its protections to White House staff as a matter of policy—so that White House staff have enjoyed the same protections that the FMLA has brought to 12 million American families. This Act now applies FMLA as a matter of law, so that future Presidents will be bound to give their employees the same rights that I have afforded voluntarily.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 26, 1996.

NOTE: H.R. 3452, approved October 26, was assigned Public Law No. 104-331.

Statement on Signing the National Invasive Species Act of 1996

October 26, 1996

I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4283, the "National Invasive Species Act of 1996."

This legislation will help to control the unintentional introduction and spread of invasive species, such as zebra mussel, throughout the waters of our Nation. The damage such species cause to our environment and the economy, including our fisheries, is significant and continues to increase.

H.R. 4283 will establish a national voluntary ballast water management program to reduce the threat of additional pest species entering

our waters. The bill also includes provisions to support important research and demonstrations of new technologies for combating aquatic nuisance species.

This bill is an important tool to safeguard our economic and environmental resources, and I am pleased to sign it.

NOTE: H.R. 4283, approved October 26, was assigned Public Law No. 104-332.