

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 a.m. at Air Force One, prior to his departure for Norfolk, VA.

The President's Radio Address *July 25, 1998*

Good morning. This year we've seen a disturbing string of weather-related emergencies all around our country, from flash floods in Tennessee to wildfires in Florida to ice storms last winter in New England. This summer record heat and drought are taking a terrible human toll, destroying crops, causing power outages, worst of all, taking lives. Just since June, more than 130 people have died because of the heat.

Certainly, the latest El Nino is partly to blame for the severe weather conditions that have besieged so many communities. But growing evidence suggests that the extreme and erratic weather we're seeing in America and around the world is being intensified by global warming.

Consider this: 1997 was the warmest year on record, and 1998 is on track to break that record. Five of the hottest years in history—the 5 hottest years—have all occurred in the 1990's. Scientists predict that July may be the hottest month since mankind began recording temperatures. The world's leading climate experts predict even more extreme weather unless we reverse this dangerous warming trend.

We're doing everything we can in the short term to help communities cope with this devastating heat wave. This week I released \$100 million in emergency funds to the 11 hottest States. On Monday Agriculture Secretary Glickman and FEMA Director James Lee Witt will travel to Texas and Oklahoma to see what more we can do to help there. Today I'm pleased to announce that the Department of Energy will begin providing new crisis assistance to low-income families, repairing and replacing air-conditioners and fans, installing insulation, and giving advice on the best way to keep homes cool in this extreme heat.

But to meet the long-term challenge of global warming, we must do more. Vice President Gore and I have launched a comprehensive, cost-effective strategy to protect our environment while creating new opportunities for economic growth. I've proposed \$6.3 billion in research and tax

incentives over the next 5 years to encourage the private sector to work with us to improve our energy efficiency, generate clean power, and reduce the greenhouse gases that contribute so much to global warming.

We must all do our part to protect the environment, and as the Nation's largest energy consumer, the Federal Government must lead. At my direction, we're undertaking a multipart initiative to put our own house in order. Today I'm pleased to announce the first four parts of this plan, aimed at increasing the efficiency of Federal buildings.

First, I'm directing Federal agencies to work more closely with private contractors to retrofit Federal buildings and other facilities with the best energy-saving technology, at no cost to taxpayers. Second, we'll replace hundreds of thousands of conventional light bulbs and fixtures with more efficient fluorescents, which will pay back in energy savings nearly 5 times what they cost to install. Third, I'm directing all agencies to work toward bringing their existing buildings up to EPA's Energy Star standard of energy efficiency. And fourth, the Defense Department and six other Federal agencies will adopt "sustainable design" guidelines for all new Federal buildings to reduce their energy use.

Now, together these measures will save taxpayers as much as a billion dollars a year in energy costs. They'll help to jumpstart markets for new technologies, and they'll protect our environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

We are facing squarely the problem of global warming, but there are still some in Congress who would rather pretend it doesn't exist. Despite mounting evidence, they would deny the science and ignore the warning signs. Rather than invest in a commonsense strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, they want to cut programs for energy efficiency and renewable energy, programs that long have enjoyed bipartisan support.

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Worst of all, some have even tried to keep the public from learning the facts about global warming by barring Federal agencies from even talking about the issue. Thankfully, this gag order was defeated in the House of Representatives just this week. Global warming is real. The risks it poses are real, and the American people have a right to know it and a responsibility to do something about it. The sooner Congress understands that, the sooner we can protect our Nation and our planet from increased flood, fire, drought, and deadly heat waves.

To protect our environment, we must put progress ahead of partisanship. For nearly 30 years now, we've had a bipartisan commitment to preserving the environment. We have to bring it to this new challenge.

As sweltering as this summer has been, if we don't act now, our children may look back on the summer of 1998 as one that was relatively mild and cool. There's no excuse for delay. We have the tools; we have the ingenuity to head off this threat. We have the opportunity and the deepest of obligations to leave our children and our grandchildren a healthy, thriving planet, God's great gift to us all.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:23 p.m. on July 24 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 25. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 24 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Memorandum on Cutting Greenhouse Gases Through Energy Savings Performance Contracts

July 25, 1998

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Cutting Greenhouse Gases through Energy Savings Performance Contracts

My Administration has made addressing the threat of global climate change one of our top environmental priorities. As the Nation's largest consumer of the fossil fuels that scientists believe are driving global warming, the Federal Government has a special responsibility to lead in developing clean energy solutions and in reducing Federal energy consumption. While Government-wide energy saving activities over the last several years have resulted in significant achievements, we can and should do more.

On March 9, 1994, I issued Executive Order 12902, Energy Efficiency and Water Conservation at Federal Facilities, which directed all executive agencies to reduce energy consumption 30 percent below 1985 levels by the year 2005. We have made significant strides, but in order to achieve this goal we must make better use of a critical energy management tool. Energy Saving Performance Contracts (ESPCs), which are authorized under the National Energy Conservation Policy Act, as modified by the Energy Policy Act of 1992, provide significant opportu-

nities for making Federal buildings more energy efficient at little or no cost to taxpayers. Under ESPC authority, agencies can contract with private energy service companies to retrofit Federal buildings with no up-front payments by the Government. These companies recover their costs from a negotiated share of the energy cost savings, with the remaining savings being returned to the contracting agency and to taxpayers. The Federal Government must make more use of these highly cost-effective contracts.

I therefore direct all Federal agencies to maximize use of this authority by the year 2000, when the authority expires. I also direct the Department of Energy (DOE) to lead an inter-agency effort to develop a legislative proposal extending ESPC authority past the year 2000. As part of this effort, I direct all agencies to identify and propose areas for expansion of ESPC authority—for instance, as appropriate, to some leased buildings, mobility, and other Federal assets. In addition, I direct agencies to propose ways to procure electricity produced using cost-effective renewable sources.

While ESPC authority has existed for some time, I have encouraged significant steps to streamline and promote greater use of this tool. To this end, the DOE and the Department of