

school in that city. We have an educational community empowerment initiative before the Congress that would enable us to support other communities in doing that, giving children a chance to stay out of trouble and in school, after school, giving children a chance to go to summer programs like this, giving us a chance to give educational opportunities to all different kinds of people. And I ask for your support for that, but I ask you to talk to your friends and neighbors about it. There are big issues in this election season that deserve to be debated.

What we really need to do is to make sure that every child, of whatever race and of whatever station, in whatever neighborhood they're born in, has the chance to live the success stories that you have lived. What we really need to do is to make sure that we are still working hard to create one America. What we really need to do is to make sure that we're not sitting on our laurels and being distracted but instead bearing down and looking forward and lifting up and pulling together this country.

All over the world people still look to the United States for leadership, for peace, for freedom, for security. But in order for us to do good in the 21st century around the world, we first must be good here at home on those things that we know matter most.

You've helped us a lot, and I can tell you that Maxine is grateful; I am grateful. You're going to make Congressman Frost look better tomorrow with what he's done for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. But the most important thing is, by being here tonight, you have helped us to work with your constituents to make 21st century America the greatest period in our Nation's history, and I thank you for it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:24 p.m., in Ballroom Two at the Washington Court Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Maxine Waters; Sidney Williams, former Ambassador to the Bahamas; and Deputy President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa.

## Statement on the Fifth Anniversary of the Family and Medical Leave Act *August 5, 1998*

Five years ago today, the Family and Medical Leave Act went into effect, giving tens of millions of Americans the peace of mind that they would never have to choose between the jobs they need and the families they love. I am very proud that the Family and Medical Leave Act was the very first piece of legislation I signed into law.

Millions of Americans have benefited from this historic legislation by taking time off—without fear of losing their jobs—to care for a newborn or adopted child, to attend to their own serious health needs, or to care for a seriously ill parent, child, or spouse. In addition, a report issued today by the Department of Labor shows the relative ease with which the law has been

implemented; the overwhelming majority of employers have found the FMLA easy to administer, and 9 out of 10 complaints have been successfully resolved, often with a simple phone call.

I have always believed that we can help our workers fulfill their family responsibilities and strengthen the economy and America's businesses. For 5 years, the Family and Medical Leave Act has helped us to fulfill both of those critical goals.

NOTE: The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, Public Law 103-3, was approved February 5, 1993.