

dinners you have to attend every year. [*Laughter*] They killed the tobacco legislation to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco. They killed the Patients' Bill of Rights. They killed an increase in the minimum wage for 12 million of the hardest working Americans at a time when unemployment is low and inflation is low. They took a step backwards on saving Social Security first by passing that tax bill in the House. They've taken a step backwards on the environment by continuing to litter every bill you can find with another environmental rider. And they've taken no action on the education agenda and no action on the International Monetary Fund.

And what I'd like to ask you to do when you go home—and there are a lot of people here from all over the country: Stick up for our people who are running, and stick up for the issues, and do what you can to make sure people understand—everybody that works for you, everybody you come in contact with—this is a very important election to vote in. Because what the other guys are gambling on is, it's a midterm election and people are doing well and they will be relaxing and they won't show up.

And what we have to say is, this is a magic moment all right, but the world is not free of difficulty. Things are changing, and we've got big challenges out there. And we're right on these issues, that the Democrats are for saving Social Security, keeping the economy going, putting education first, and passing the Patients' Bill of Rights. I think that's a pretty good program.

And I'd like to say one other thing just for the record, because I know it's not just us here, because this is being covered by the press. It

is true that Barbara Boxer has been a conscience of the Senate. It is true that she stood up for principle. It's true that she is an independent voice; she certainly doesn't always vote the way I think she ought to. And that's good; that's what makes America work. But I think it's also important to point out for the record that she has been a very good Senator for California.

I have worked with Jane Harman on issues that affect her district. I have worked with many other Members. I've worked with Senator Feinstein on the Mojave Desert and other things. But California has a lot of people in the Congress; it's the biggest congressional delegation. So there's a lot of competition for this. The member of the California congressional delegation who has called me the largest number of times to do something very specific for the State of California is Barbara Boxer, and I want the voters to know that.

So you ought to be proud you were here. But when you go home, you ought to think about what I told you. You don't want to wake up on election day or the day after and think that all those polls of certain voters were the polls that counted instead of the polls of registered voters, which reflects how the people feel. What we have to do is to bring the public's feelings to the ballot box in November. You've helped Barbara tonight; let's keep working until we can help them all.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:02 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Smith and Elizabeth F. Bagley; Dorothy and Tony Rodham, the First Lady's mother and brother; Ben Barnes, owner, Entrecorp; and former Representative Marty Russo.

## Statement on Senate Action on Higher Education Legislation

*September 29, 1998*

I am delighted that the Senate today passed the Higher Education Amendments of 1998. This legislation marks an important step forward in my effort to help more Americans enter the doors of college. In today's global economy, what you earn depends on what you learn. This bill will make it easier for millions of Americans

to get the higher education they need to succeed in the global economy. It also demonstrates how we can make progress on education policy when we choose bipartisan cooperation over division.

By adopting the new low interest rate for student loans we proposed last winter, this bill

will save American students and their families billions of dollars in interest payments. But this bill does much more to help all Americans go to college. It responds to the challenge I issued in the State of the Union to create a High Hopes initiative, where colleges reach down to middle school students in high-poverty areas to give them the support they need to be ready for higher education; incorporates our ideas on recruiting and training top-notch teachers for our public schools; builds on our efforts to de-

ploy cutting-edge technology so that our students can learn anytime, anywhere; and modernizes the delivery of student aid by creating the Government's first-ever performance based organization, a recommendation made by the Vice President's National Performance Review.

I look forward to signing this bill into law, and I urge Congress to provide the accompanying funding for these new critical initiatives so that they can work effectively to give America's students the quality education they deserve.

## Statement on the Death of Tom Bradley

*September 29, 1998*

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of Mayor Tom Bradley. The son of a sharecropper who became a police lieutenant, he rose to lead our Nation's second largest city for two decades. He was a builder, bringing a remarkably successful Olympic Games to Los Angeles, encouraging a thriving downtown and

improving mass transit. Just as important, he built bridges across the lines that divide us, uniting people of many races and backgrounds in the most diverse city in America. He was a pioneer and a leader. Our thoughts and prayers are with Ethel and their family.

## Statement on Senate Action on Year 2000 Information and Readiness Legislation

*September 29, 1998*

I am pleased that the Senate last night passed the "Year 2000 Information and Readiness Disclosure Act," important bipartisan legislation to help our Nation prepare its computer systems for the new millennium.

This bill, which builds upon a proposal my administration submitted to Congress in July, will help businesses, State and local government, and Federal agencies better address the year 2000 (Y2K) problem by providing limited liability protections to encourage greater information

sharing about solutions, while also protecting consumers from misleading advertising or other statements when purchasing products for their own use.

January 1, 2000, is one deadline we cannot push back. I urge the House to pass this critical legislation before the end of the legislative session. I look forward to signing it into law so that Y2K information sharing will enable the Nation to prepare for this global challenge.