

them early to stay in school, learn their lessons, and go on to college.

Small classes, trained teachers, modern schools, high standards, public school choice, and more—this is a plan that can revolutionize education in America. But the Republican majority in Congress hasn't even passed the annual education investment bill yet. When it comes to education, Congress simply must not settle for an incomplete. I ask the Republicans in Congress to join the Democrats to put progress over

partisanship, and send me a full education investment bill.

Remember, the budget Congress must now finalize will be the last complete budget of the 20th century. We cannot pass up this golden opportunity to invest wisely now to help all our children seize the promise of the century to come.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on the Attack on Matthew Shepard

October 10, 1998

I was deeply grieved by the act of violence perpetrated against Matthew Shepard of Wyoming.

The Justice Department has assured me that local law enforcement officials are proceeding diligently to bring those responsible to justice. And I am determined that we will do everything we can and offer whatever assistance is appropriate.

Hillary and I ask that your thoughts and your prayers be with Mr. Shepard and his family, and with the people of Laramie, Wyoming. In the face of this terrible act of violence, they are joining together to demonstrate that an act of evil like this is not what our country is all about. In fact, it strikes at the very heart of what it means to be an American and at the values that define us as a nation. We must all reaffirm that we will not tolerate this.

Just this year there have been a number of recent tragedies across our country that involve hate crimes. The vicious murder of James Byrd last June in Jasper, Texas, and the assault this

week on Mr. Shepard are only among the most horrifying examples.

Almost one year ago I proposed that Congress enact the "Hate Crimes Prevention Act." Our Federal laws already punish some crimes committed against people on the basis of race or religion or national origin, but we should do more. This crucial legislation would strengthen and expand the ability of the Justice Department to prosecute hate crimes by removing needless jurisdictional requirements for existing crimes and by giving Federal prosecutors the power to prosecute hate crimes committed because of the victim's sexual orientation, gender, or disability. All Americans deserve protection from hate.

There is nothing more important to the future of this country than our standing together against intolerance, prejudice, and violent bigotry. It is not too late for Congress to take action before they adjourn and pass the "Hate Crimes Prevention Act." By doing so, they will help make all Americans more safe and secure.

Statement on the Death of Clark M. Clifford

October 10, 1998

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of Clark Clifford, an American statesman who helped shape half a century's struggle for freedom. From his first days by President Tru-

man's side as a young naval aide, to his wise counsel to President Carter, he was someone upon whom Presidents could rely for judicious

Oct. 10 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1998

and effective advice. When his wisdom and experience were needed, which was often, he offered it with charm, grace, and a certain humility. As Secretary of Defense at a critical time under President Johnson, he helped to begin

the search for peace in Vietnam. His legacy of public service is notable in our history. Our thoughts and prayers go to his wife, Marny, and their three daughters.

Statement on Congressional Action on Charter School Expansion Legislation

October 10, 1998

I am very pleased that the Congress has approved the "Charter School Expansion Act of 1998." This law will ensure that the charter schools movement will give parents and students more choices, better schools, and greater accountability for results. When I was elected President, there was only one charter school in the Nation. With help from the charter school initiative I proposed in 1993 and signed into law in 1994, there are now more than 1,000 charter schools serving more than 200,000 students across the Nation. This new measure is an important step toward reaching my goal of creating 3,000 high-quality public charter

schools that will educate more than half a million students.

There is more to do to create the renaissance in public education our Nation needs and our students deserve. Congress must put progress ahead of partisanship and strengthen our public schools by enacting legislation that will help communities hire 100,000 well-trained teachers to reduce class size in the early grades, modernize or build 5,000 schools, strengthen early literacy programs, provide quality after-school programs, and put in place high national standards and tests in the basic skills of reading and math.

Remarks During Education Budget Negotiations and an Exchange With Reporters

October 11, 1998

The President. In only 447 days, the 21st century begins, a century in which the education of our Nation's children will matter more than ever before. Yet, far too many of our schools are not ready for that new century. We've all seen the news stories about teachers teaching classes in subjects they didn't major in in college, about schools so overcrowded they have trailers out back to handle the overflow, about classrooms with 35 or more students all vying for a minute of attention from the teachers, about schools so old they can't be connected to the Internet.

This can be changed, but we cannot afford to wait. And we are waiting for the Republican majority in Congress to bring this year's education investment bill to the floor. The delay must end. On education, Congress must choose

progress over partisanship. We need a strong bipartisan bill.

Just a few days ago, I had the honor of signing into law such a bill to open the doors wider to higher education. And in just the last 2 days, Republicans and Democrats have worked together to pass strong charter school and vocational education measures. And I'd like to thank Senator Jeffords, Senator Kennedy, Senator Coats, Congressmen Goodling and Clay and Roemer for that. Now it's time once again for Congress to cross party lines and send me an education budget that I can sign that is worthy of our children and their future.

This bill must make the right investments in our children's future. It must include a strong downpayment on my request for 100,000 teachers for smaller classes in the early grades. It