

to 3 years imprisonment and a maximum fine of \$250,000.

Specifically, the legislation would penalize the theft of personal information with the intent to commit an unlawful act, such as obtaining fraudulent loans or credit cards, drug trafficking, or other illegal purposes. It would also direct the Federal Trade Commission to help victims deal with the consequences of this crime.

Tens of thousands of Americans have been victims of identity theft. Impostors often run up huge debts, file for bankruptcy, and commit serious crimes. It can take years for victims of identity theft to restore their credit ratings and their reputations. This legislation will enable the United States Secret Service, the Federal Bu-

reau of Investigation, and other law enforcement agencies to combat this type of crime, which can financially devastate its victims.

I want to thank the Vice President for his leadership on this and other privacy issues. As we enter the Information Age, it is critical that our newest technologies support our oldest values.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 30, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 4151, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 105–318.

Statement on Signing the Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998 *October 30, 1998*

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4309, the “Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998.” This Act authorizes continued and expanded U.S. contributions to treatment centers, both in the United States and around the world, for persons who suffer from the mental and physical anguish of having been tortured.

The United States has contributed to these centers for many years—directly to domestic centers through the Department of Health and Human Services and to overseas centers through the Agency for International Development, and indirectly, through Department of State contributions to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for the Victims of Torture. Contributions of this nature are a concrete and practical step that the U.S. Government takes to mitigate the effects of this serious, and far too pervasive, human rights violation.

I want to stress, however, that assisting torture victims does not end the curse of torture. The

United States will continue its efforts to shine a spotlight on this horrible practice wherever it occurs, and we will do all we can to bring it to an end.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to the successful passage of this legislation. I also salute those nongovernmental organizations active in the cause of human rights, who encouraged congressional passage of this Act and who work tirelessly to keep alive the spirit of human rights, in our hearts and in our domestic and foreign policy.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 30, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 4309, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 105–320.