

Jan. 29 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

opportunity the people who came before us never had.

Do you know how many people were mayors of your cities or who held the office of President, in this century, who would have given anything—anything—to have had the chance to do what is right before our eyes? I think we ought to do it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE. The President spoke at 9:50 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Deedee Corradini of Salt Lake City, UT; Mayor Wellington E. Webb of Denver, CO; Mayor Brent Coles of Boise, ID; Mayor Edward G. Rendell of Philadelphia, PA; author and public management consultant David Osborne; and Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC.

Statement on the Transportation Department's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

January 29, 1999

For 6 years, our administration has worked hard to give more Americans the tools to make the most of their lives. Today I am pleased to announce that the Department of Transportation is reforming and strengthening a program designed to open the doors of economic opportunity for those who have too often been shut out.

The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program gives thousands of minority-owned and women-owned business an opportunity to compete for State and local contracts to maintain our roads, construct new highways, and improve public transportation, among many other projects.

After carefully considering hundreds of comments and suggestions from local leaders, business owners, and citizens from across the country, the Transportation Department has amended the DBE rules to ensure that this vitally important program works more fairly, more efficiently, and meets all constitutional requirements. The new rule is an excellent example of our efforts to mend, not end, affirmative action. I applaud the hard work and dedication of Secretary Slater and his staff to make sure that all Americans can share in this time of prosperity.

Statement on the Attorney General's Decision To Conclude the Investigation of Harold Ickes

January 29, 1999

I have always had confidence that Harold Ickes acted lawfully and appropriately, and I am pleased by the decision announced by the Attorney General today. Harold's contributions to this administration over the years have helped improve the quality of life in this country, and I will always be thankful for his advice and hard work on behalf of the American people.

NOTE. On January 29, Attorney General Janet Reno notified the Special Division of the Court of Appeals in Washington, DC, that there were no reasonable grounds for further investigation into whether Mr. Ickes knowingly and willfully testified falsely before Congress in September 1997.