

and abroad, and we'll be able to do it if we don't forget that what binds us together is more important than all the things that divide us.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:55 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon hosts Jack and Phyllis Rosen; former Vice Presidential candidate Geraldine A. Ferraro; former Congressman Peter H. Kostmayer; Joseph

J. Andrew, national chair, Beth Dozoretz, national finance chair, and Fran Katz, national finance director, Democratic National Committee; Gov. George E. Pataki of New York; Columbine High School gunmen Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold; Tex Hall, chairman of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation (the Three Affiliated Tribes); and Gregg Bourland, chairman, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

Statement on Proposed Legislation To Improve Work Incentives for Persons With Disabilities

May 19, 1999

I commend the House Commerce Committee for its overwhelming bipartisan support for the "Work Incentives Improvement Act" today. By unanimously endorsing this legislation, the committee has taken an important step towards removing significant barriers to work for one of our Nation's most significant untapped resources—millions of people with disabilities. The committee's action, under the leadership of Chairman Bliley and Congressman Dingell, parallels the overwhelmingly bipartisan support that the Roth/Moynihan/Jeffords/Kennedy version of this legislation received from the Senate Finance Committee.

Americans with disabilities can and do bring tremendous energy and talent to the American workforce, but the unemployment rate for all working-age adults with disabilities is nearly 75 percent. One of the most glaring problems is

that people with disabilities frequently become ineligible for Medicaid or Medicare if they go back to work. This puts people with disabilities in the untenable position of choosing between health care coverage and work. The "Work Incentives Improvement Act" would improve job opportunities for people with disabilities by increasing access to health care and employment services.

Justin Dart, one of the foremost leaders of the disability community, has said that the "Work Incentives Improvement Act" is "one of the boldest since the landmark passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act." As I indicated in my State of the Union Address, I could not agree more with him. I urge Speaker Hastert and Majority Leader Lott to move promptly to schedule votes on this important and long overdue legislation.

Memorandum on Assessment of Space Launch Vehicles

May 19, 1999

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense

Subject: Assessment of Space Launch Vehicles

Our national space transportation capabilities are critical to the overall strength and stability of our commercial, civil, and national security space sectors.

As we enter the 21st century, reliable access to space will be more important than ever in

accomplishing our national goals. It is vitally important that we fully understand the root causes behind the recent launch vehicle failures and take corrective action. Therefore, I request that you, in coordination with the Director of Central Intelligence and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), provide me with an interim report in 90 days and a final report in 180 days on the