

under that accord. I am convinced that it is possible to achieve full implementation of this historic agreement in all its aspects by next spring, as contemplated by its terms.

The British and Irish Governments intend to conduct over the next few weeks an interim review of the implementation of the agreement aimed at overcoming the hurdles in the peace

process. For the future of all the people of Northern Ireland who want an enduring peace and a normal life, I call upon all those involved to find the way to get the peace process back on track. I am ready to assist Prime Minister Blair, Prime Minister Ahern, and the parties in any way I can to achieve this goal.

Statement on Senate Action on Patients' Bill of Rights Legislation *July 15, 1999*

Tonight's party line vote for a weak, unenforceable Patients' Bill of Rights is the wrong course for America. The Republican leadership's bill is a Patients' Bill of Rights in name only.

It fails to protect more than 110 million Americans including the vast majority of Americans in HMO's. For those it does cover, this bill fails to ensure patients' access to the specialists they need; fails to ensure patients the rights to keep their doctors throughout a course, a treatment; fails to prevent insurance company accountants from making final calls on medical decisions; and it fails to hold health plans accountable for actions that harm their patients.

If Congress insists on passing such an empty promise to the American people, I will not sign the bill. Passing a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights should not be a partisan issue. This should be about protecting patients, not insurance companies.

We will not stop working on this critical issue until we provide patients the protections they need. The American people know the difference between a good and bad bill. Every major doctors, nurses, and patients organization in the country knows the difference. I believe that the will of the people will still prevail in this Congress.

Memorandum on Occupational Illness Compensation for Energy Contractor Personnel *July 15, 1999*

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Energy, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, Assistant to the President for Economic Policy

Subject: Occupational Illness Compensation for Energy Contractor Personnel

Contractor personnel working for the Department of Energy (DOE) and its predecessor agencies helped our Nation win the Cold War but often faced dangerous working conditions. A small number of them were exposed to beryllium, a metal used in the production of weapons, and subsequently contracted chronic beryllium disease (CBD), a debilitating lung disease for which there is no cure. Most of those ex-

posed worked under contract for the DOE and are not covered by the Federal workers' compensation program. As a result many of those with CBD have not received the occupational illness benefits otherwise available to regular Federal employees.

Today, I am pleased to announce that my Administration will submit draft legislation to the Congress that would create a new program to give DOE contractor employees with CBD and beryllium sensitivity the same benefits—certain medical costs and lost wages—now available to Federal employees. The American people believe in fairness, and I am sure that they would