

believe is right. And they'll give everybody that wants a vote a fair hearing. They'll try to be fair.

And what we owe to them is to make sure that however they vote, they know what they're doing. And then whatever happens, none of us have any gripes. But people who get caught up in politics as an end in itself, who want the power, the position rather than the purpose, forget that no matter how much power you have and no matter how long you serve—and I've laughed at people, I said I'm glad we've got this two term limit because if I could run three or four more times, I probably would; that's true—but no matter how long you serve, in the grand sweep of things, it's like a minute or two.

I went to a memorial service for Lane Kirkland yesterday. He was over 75 years old; he seemed like a young fellow to me, because he kept his spirit young. But none of us are around here for very long. We don't get to live very long. We don't get to serve very long. And we need to remember that this is all about the people that served us lunch today. This is all about children that Hillary and I were with this morning who got adopted because we used the power of the Federal Government to end the rules and the bureaucratic snarls that kept foster children from moving quickly into adopted homes.

This is really all about the American people, and it is a gift to be able to serve. And I believe it's a gift to be fortunate enough in this country to have resources to give. And I think we should walk out of this room, thanking our lucky stars that we could be here today, thanking God we got the chance to serve and test our ideas, and being absolutely determined that we are going to be of good cheer, of strong confidence, and we're going to make absolutely sure the American people know why we stand for what we stand for and exactly what we intend to do in the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. in the York Room at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to John Merrigan, chair, Democratic Business Council; Mitchell Delk, vice chairman, Federal Home Mortgage Corp.; former Mayor Jan Laverty Jones of Las Vegas; Beth E. Dozoretz, national finance chair, Fran Katz, national finance director, Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Lottie Shackelford, vice chair, and former Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Lou Weisbach, chief executive officer, HA-LO Industries, Inc.; Janice Griffin, national chair, Women's Leadership Forum; and Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit.

Statement on Signing the Organ Donor Leave Act *September 24, 1999*

Today, I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 457, the "Organ Donor Leave Act," which would enhance the Federal Government's leadership role in encouraging organ donations by making it easier for Federal employees to become donors.

Currently, more than 65,000 Americans are awaiting an organ transplant. Last year, almost 5,000 Americans died while waiting for an organ to become available. This amounts to an average of 13 citizens each day. Many of these deaths could have been prevented if there were a sufficient supply of donor organs. H.R. 457 is a valuable tool to help address the needs of Americans waiting for organs by encouraging donations by Federal employees.

In 1997, my Administration launched the National Organ and Tissue Donation Initiative, which included new efforts by the Federal Government to increase awareness among Federal employees of the need for organ and tissue donation. The Department of Health and Human Services, in partnership with the Office of Personnel Management, has implemented a Government-wide campaign to encourage Federal employees to consider organ donation and, as the country's largest employer, to set the example for the private sector as well as other public organizations.

H.R. 457 builds on my Administration's longstanding commitment to increasing organ donations nationwide. Under current law, a Federal

employee may use up to 7 days of paid leave each year, other than sick leave or annual leave, to serve as a donor. Recent surveys of doctors and hospitals indicate that the current 7-day limit is clearly insufficient for recovery from organ donation surgery. This bill increases the amount of paid leave available to Federal employees who donate organs for transplants, providing up to 30 days of paid leave, in addition to annual and sick leave, for organ donation.

In addition to our current efforts, my Administration will go forward in the coming weeks with the framework for an organ allocation system that will serve patients better. Our approach, which has been validated by the Institute of Medicine, calls for improved allocation policies to be designed by transplant profes-

sionals, not by the Government, and would ensure better and fairer treatment for patients. We need an organ allocation system that is as good as our transplant technology, and it is time for sound allocation policies to go into effect.

It gives me great pleasure to sign H.R. 457 into law. I welcome the opportunity to help Federal employees participate in this life-saving effort.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 24, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 457, approved September 24, was assigned Public Law No. 106-56.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner *September 24, 1999*

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, you can see I'm a little hoarse tonight. I lost my voice coming back from New Zealand; then I got it back today, and I'm losing it again. It's 10 o'clock on Friday night, and you've heard me give this speech before. [*Laughter*]

I'll never forget, once I went to hear Tina Turner, that great political philosopher—[*laughter*—in a concert, and she sang all of her new songs since she made her comeback, about 10 years ago. And then at the end she started singing "Proud Mary," which was her first hit 25 years ago. And everybody went nuts—25 years ago or 10 years ago—everybody went nuts. And they were clapping, and she walked up to the microphone, and she said, "I've been singing this song for 25 years. And it gets better every time I sing it." [*Laughter*]

So I won't keep you long. But let me join the Vice President in thanking Bob and Arlene, Bob and Clarice for hosting this dinner. I always love to come back to this beautiful home; I've been coming here for years. I would never tire of it. I thank Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend for being here, for being our friend, and for being, I believe, by any measure, the finest Lieutenant Governor in the United States, for her ideas and her actions.

I thank Joe Andrew, Roy Romer, Beth Dozoretz, Andy Tobias, my good friend Mayor Archer, all the officials of the Democratic Party. And most of all, I thank you.

Now I want to give a brief but, maybe, unconventional speech here. I want to sort of unpack where we are, what the Vice President said, what Bob and Bob said, all the nice things they said about our record and all that, what it really means for where we are and where we're going, because that's what matters.

When I asked Al Gore to become my Vice Presidential partner, we put out a book called, "Putting People First." And a lot of experts said we were crazy. They said, "This whole thing is crazy; these two guys are the same age." I look 100 years older than him now. [*Laughter*] They said, "These two guys are the same age; they come from States that border each other; they more or less think alike. This is nuts. Why are they doing this?"

Then we put out this book. And as evidence of the sort of cynicism of the political process, people said, "Now this is really nuts. Here they put out this book; they've given all these specific commitments to the American people; and, you know how politics is, they're not going to do any of this. Then this book will be used to beat them over the head with."