

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."

You never hear about our book, do you? Do you know why? Because a respected scholar of the Presidency says we have kept a higher percentage of our commitments than the last five administrations, even though we have given far more than any. Now why is that? And not because—is it because we're more honest than they were? No. It's because we thought through what we believed, and analyzed where we thought the country was; and said, okay, if this is true then, therefore, we have to do these things.

We've got to get rid of this deficit; we've got to expand America's business; we've got to bring opportunity to people who don't have it; we've got to invest in education. We had ideas, and we were following on 12 years of the Reagan/Bush era, which was premised on two great ideas. One was that the Government was the problem. You remember all those speeches: America's in trouble because the Government is the problem—1980? The second was the interesting proposition that we would balance the budget and grow the economy forever if we just cut taxes and increased spending. Shall I say it again? *[Laughter]* That's what they thought. So we didn't believe that. We just said, let's go back to arithmetic and get America ready for the modern world; and it worked, and you've talked about that.

Now, in 1998—I want to talk about a little more arithmetic—we won seats in the Congress in the midterm elections for the first time since 1822, in the sixth year of a Presidency, because people like you gave us enough money to get our message across, even though we were outspent \$100 million. Doesn't matter how much money they have, if you've got enough. *[Laughter]* Right? We had enough.

We need your help now. And what I want to say to you is, that's all that matters now. We've got to have enough. Because when young people come up to me and say, "I'm interested in politics, Mr. President. What should I do, and how should I do it?" I always say, "Well, if you run, try to make sure that on election day, everyone who votes against you knows exactly what they're doing."

And if you think about it, that's what democracy should be. If everybody knows what they're doing, and you lose, you can't gripe. You are making sure, with your contributions, that when people vote, they'll know what they're doing.

The other thing I want to tell you is, you should be of good cheer. You should be optimistic. You should be confident. Why? Because we've got a good record—you just heard we've got good plans for the future—and because most Americans aren't thinking about this yet, and all the pundits that want you to believe it's all over are the same crowd that have buried me 9 or 10 times already. *[Laughter]* You should be of good cheer.

Normally, at a time like this, you would expect a reasonably close election, and I believe it will be reasonably close. And I believe we'll win. And that's what I really believe is going to happen, because we've got a good record, good ideas, and because right now, people think they want change. And what they need to understand is, we want change, too. I would vote against the Vice President if he said, "Vote for me, and I'll do everything that Bill Clinton would do." I would say, "I'm sorry, Al; I can't vote for you."

This country's still around here after 223 years because we keep changing. We're constantly reimagining ourselves and exploring new possibilities. That's why we're still here. So that's not the question. The question is not, are we going to be for change? The question is, what kind of change are we going to be for? And you need to go tell people that.

Are we going to build on what we have done, that's brought all these good things in America, and deal with the aging of America? Are we going to deal with the fact that in 30 years we'll have twice as many people over 65, when all the baby boomers retire—two people working for every one person drawing Social Security—and use this period to fix Social Security and Medicare?

Are we going to deal with the global economy and what it means for us, and not squander this money until we pay down the debt? We could have this country debt-free in 15 years for the first time since 1835 and leave all the borrowing for the private sector—lower interest rates, more jobs, higher incomes, lower car payments, home mortgage payments, college payments. We could do that.

The Democrats are supposed to be the liberal, progressive party. Why should they be for a debt-free America? Because average people are better off if the interest rates are lower and inflation's lower and growth is higher.

He's got ideas that would make this the safest big country in the world. It's really important. I'm proud, you know—I'm on my way out, so I tell everybody we've got the lowest crime rate in 26 years. And that's good; it makes me sound good. But the truth is, about all we have done is to restore this country to basic sanity. The country is still too violent. There's still too many crazy people out there with guns killing innocent people, walking into churches, and doing all this stuff that's going on.

We've got a plan to put more police where they ought to be, take reasonable measures to keep guns out of the wrong hands. They'll turn our crime policy back over to the NRA. And it'll get worse. That's just one example.

So the issue is not—and you need to talk to people about this—the issue is not, are we going to change? The issue is, what kind of change are we for?

I'm really proud that we thought ideas were important and that we worked to implement them. The Vice President's votes will become famous as the election wears on, and everybody will know that, as he points out, every time he votes, we win. And he voted, and we won the economic plan. And he voted, and we won in the Senate the right to close the loophole in the Brady bill affecting the gun shows.

But he also ran our technology policy, that led to the Telecommunications Act, which has produced already over 300,000 high-wage jobs. He managed our empowerment zone and enterprise community program, which is—well, ask Mayor Archer about it. Ask Mayor Archer. Detroit—don't take my word for it; on the way out of here, before you go out, just go ask him. Detroit's unemployment rate today is one-half of what it was on the day we were elected in 1992. One-half. Part of it's their brilliant mayor, but part of it is the empowerment zone program.

Now, I say that to say ideas matter and making sure people know about them matter. And I want you to go out there and talk about them.

But I think our ideas are right. I think we ought to stay out of debt and pay this debt down. I think we ought to keep trying to improve the environment and grow the economy. I think we were right with the family and medical leave law; we ought to keep working to help people balance work and family.

I think we ought to keep trying to build a community and be for this employment non-discrimination act and be for the hate crimes legislation, because I think that when everybody who's law-abiding can work together, we do better in a global society, and people are happier, and life is more interesting. And that's what we're for. And you need to be in a good humor about this.

I thank you for giving this money. We can make sure that everybody who votes knows what they're doing. But you need to go out and repeat these arguments and be of good cheer.

Let me tell you one other thing. Except in Iowa, New Hampshire, and Washington, DC, most people aren't thinking about the Presidential election yet. In Conway, Arkansas, they're worried about the price of cattle.

But they will worry. Their minds and their hearts will kick in. And almost every time, the American people get it right. If we do our job, they'll get it right. That's why we're still around here.

So trust them. Stay with us. Consider it a privilege to give; we consider it a privilege to serve. We're going to give this country its best days in the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Robert and Arlene Kogod and Bob and Clarice Smith; Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend of Maryland; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Roy Romer, former general chair, Beth Dozoretz, national finance chair, Andy Tobias, treasurer, and Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, general co-chair, Democratic National Committee.