

Oct. 12 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

invite the leaders of the auto industry to the White House to try to find a way to address this issue notwithstanding the limitation in this bill.

I appreciate the increase in funding for motor carrier safety provided in the bill, as it is the goal of the Secretary of Transportation to reduce motor carrier safety fatalities by 50 percent within 10 years. However, I am disappointed that the full funding requested for motor carrier safety grants to States was not provided, as this funding is needed to help achieve this goal. I am also concerned about language that precludes enforcement action, and my Administration will work with the Congress to address this problem.

I am also troubled by the widespread earmarking of vital highway and transit programs without regard to criteria that have been established to ensure that these are sound investments. For example, a number of projects specified for the Job Access and Reverse Commute program are strictly for research, an activity that would not otherwise be eligible for this funding. In general, earmarks tend to be aimed at projects that have not advanced in the local

planning process and, as a result, the funding will likely remain unused for a longer period of time, depriving ready-to-go projects of needed Federal assistance.

I recognize the widespread transportation needs of our country, which is why transportation infrastructure investment during my Administration has increased by 32 percent above the previous Administration's average. However, our transportation investment must be strategic and applied to critical needs, and excessive earmarking can undermine this goal. I ask the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to work with the Department of Transportation to see that essential projects that can quickly utilize Federal funding are given the ability to move forward.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 9, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 2084, approved October 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106-69. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 12.

Statement on Signing Family Farmers Bankruptcy Relief Legislation *October 9, 1999*

I have signed into law S. 1606, which extends the provisions of chapter 12 of the Bankruptcy Code until July 1, 2000.

Chapter 12 of the Bankruptcy Code was enacted in 1986 to provide bankruptcy relief to our Nation's family farmers, enabling them to avoid the loss of their farms and their way of life. Chapter 12 has also benefited creditors, who would be unlikely to obtain repayment if these farmers went out of business.

This is the third short-term extension of chapter 12 that I have approved since last fall. As

I stated in March when I approved the most recent extension, I urge the Congress to make chapter 12 permanent.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 9, 1999.

NOTE: S. 1606, approved October 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106-70. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 12.