

the people who get jobs are keeping them. They're getting raises and paying taxes and teaching their children to honor the dignity of work.

We've changed the culture of welfare from one that fostered dependence to one that honors and rewards work. That's why I fought to create high performance bonuses for States that do the most for parents entering the work force. I am pleased to announce the first of those awards today.

Twenty-seven States will share \$200 million in bonuses for four categories: how many people they've placed in jobs; how well those people did at keeping their jobs and improving their wages; the biggest improvement in job placement; and the biggest improvement in on-the-job success. The States ranked highest were Indiana, Minnesota, Washington, and Florida. I congratulate these States for their achievement. If every State had performed as well as Indiana in placing workers in jobs, we would have helped more than twice as many people go to work last year. I challenge every State to invest its welfare reform resources in helping people to succeed at work.

This is not just about numbers. It's about real people. People like Wendy Waxler of Washington, DC. Wendy wanted a job, but needed time to care for her daughter, who has cerebral palsy. She couldn't afford to lose the Medicaid that paid the doctor's bills. Through welfare to work, Wendy found a flexible job and kept Medicaid and food stamps, at first. Now she and her daughter have health insurance, and Wendy has new confidence and new dreams.

People like Wendy Waxler are an asset our economy simply cannot afford to waste. So we must do more to support working families and people who are trying to turn their lives around. That's why I've asked Congress to raise the minimum wage, so that a full-time job is a real ticket out of poverty; it's why we won new resources and will fight for more, for our new

markets initiative, to make it easier for businesses and banks to invest in America's poorest communities; and why I'm asking Congress to increase our commitment to quality child care.

All of us have a moral responsibility to do everything we can to ensure that every eligible family receives health care and nutritional assistance, so all our children can grow up healthy. I fought hard to ensure that the welfare reform law guaranteed these critical supports. Now our administration is taking steps to hold States accountable and make sure families get the benefits they need. Today I am also announcing new performance bonuses like the ones I just awarded for States that do the best at enrolling eligible families in Medicaid and food stamps.

Finally, the old welfare system actually weakened families, by discouraging couples from marrying or living with their children. We want to change that, so starting next year there will also be bonuses for States that do the most to get poor children into two-parent homes, where we know they have the best chance of breaking the cycle of poverty.

Supporting hard-pressed working families and helping people to make the transition from welfare to work isn't just the right thing to do; it's also the smart thing. It encourages millions of people to take responsibility for their families, their future. In so doing, it expands opportunity and strengthens our economy and builds a healthier future for all of us.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:15 p.m. on December 3 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 4. In his remarks, the President referred to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Public Law No. 104-193. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 3 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

## Statement on the World Trade Organization Seattle Round *December 4, 1999*

We made progress at the Seattle WTO trade meetings although significant differences remain.

I remain optimistic that we can use the coming months to narrow our differences and launch

a successful new round of global trade talks. A successful round will include bringing down barriers in agriculture, manufacturing, and services; keeping E-commerce tariff-free; and ensuring that trade will lift living conditions for working people everywhere while protecting the environment. And as I said in Seattle, a successful

WTO must be more open and accessible to all citizens around the world.

I am determined to move forward on the path of free trade and economic growth while ensuring a human face is put on the global economy.

## Statement on the Fire at the Worcester Cold Storage and Warehouse Company Building in Worcester, Massachusetts

*December 4, 1999*

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the tragedy that has struck the Worcester community. The six firefighters who are now missing and presumed dead valiantly put their lives on the line in the effort to save others and protect their city. Their courageous service reminds us all of the tremendous commitment

and sacrifice made by the thousands of firefighters across America who risk their own lives every day to protect our communities. Our thoughts and prayers go out to these courageous firefighters, to their families, to the Worcester Fire Department, and the city of Worcester.

## Remarks at the Kennedy Center Honors Reception

*December 5, 1999*

*The President.* Thank you very much. Thank you all, and welcome to the White House; to the wonderful array of artists who are in this room and members of the Cabinet and others who have come to be part of this happy evening.

We share this evening with honorees who have touched our lives and ennobled our Nation. Recently, Hillary and I went to Greece, and I had the opportunity early in the morning to go and visit the Parthenon, a magnificent, almost unbelievable architectural creation, given what had to be done to make it work and the materials and instruments that were available at the time. The Parthenon was the brainchild of the great statesman Pericles. Pericles said this to his soldiers in the Peloponnesian War: "We shall not be without witness. There are mighty monuments to our power which will make us the wonder of this and succeeding ages."

As the curtain falls on this remarkable century, at the dawn of a new millennium, it is fitting that we Americans should ask ourselves, what will be the monuments that we offer up to the gaze of succeeding ages? Today, we are

blessed with unprecedented prosperity and military might, but I believe it will be true of us, as it was Pericles' Athens, that the monuments of power that truly define, sustain us, and last throughout the ages are those that spring from the mind and the spirit.

Just as we remember the great philosophers and playwrights, the historians and architects of ancient Greece, so tonight Hillary and I are proud to welcome you here to pay tribute to these five remarkable artists and creators. They come from many places; their immense talents range over a wide creative landscape. In giving the world new ways to understand the human experience and celebrate the human spirit, they are all leaving their own enduring monuments for succeeding ages.

And now, to present them: four Americans and one Scotsman whom tonight I declare an honorary American citizen. *[Laughter]* It seems appropriate to do on the 10th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. After all, we couldn't have won the cold war without you. *[Laughter]*