

May 12 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

assessed 10 times the amount of civil penalties assessed 10 years ago. But, even with this more vigorous enforcement, too many companies still do not report, especially in cases involving serious harm.

This legislative proposal would enhance the CPSC's civil and criminal enforcement authority. It would provide an added incentive for companies to comply with the law so that we can get dangerous products out of stores and consumers' homes more quickly.

My legislative proposal would also help to make some product recalls more effective by allowing the CPSC to choose an alternative remedy if the CPSC finds that the manufacturer's chosen remedy is not in the public interest. Under current law, a company with a defective product that is being recalled has the right to select the remedy to be offered to the public.

My proposal would continue to permit the company to select the remedy in a product recall. My proposal would also, however, allow the CPSC to determine—after an opportunity for a hearing—that the remedy selected by the company is not in the public interest. The CPSC may then order the company to carry out an alternative program that is in the public interest.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission helps to keep America's children and families safe. This legislative proposal would help the CPSC be even more effective in protecting the public from dangerous products. I urge the Congress to give this legislation prompt and favorable consideration.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 12, 2000.

The President's Radio Address

May 13, 2000

Good morning. This weekend Americans celebrate the first Mother's Day of the 21st century. For most of us, it's a happy occasion, a chance to thank the women who gave us life, cared for us as children, nurtured us into adulthood. But for thousands of mothers and fathers whose children have been killed by gunfire, tomorrow will be a day of sad memories.

Every day in America, nearly a dozen children are killed by guns, and 12 families receive a wound that never heals. And every day in America, millions of moms and dads watch their children walk out the door in the morning and wonder if they'll come home safe that night.

That's why the First Lady and I are giving our strong support to tomorrow's Million Mom March. Tens of thousands of mothers and others are marching in Washington and more than 60 other cities across our Nation. They're saying, enough is enough. Congress must pass commonsense gun legislation to protect our children without constraining the rights of legitimate gun owners.

Many of the organizers have lost children of their own and other loved ones to gunfire. This past week I met with some of them at the White House and heard their stories: a son shot

while playing with neighbors in his own backyard in New York; a teenager shot at his front door by party crashers in Virginia; a daughter shot with four others by classmates at her Arkansas middle school; a young man shot by Illinois gang members who expected, just like on television, that he would get up and walk away.

These moms are finding in their fear and loss the strength to send a wake-up call across America. As a father, I was heartbroken by their stories; as an American citizen, I was inspired. They're saying gun violence touches us all, wherever we live, whatever the color of our skin, whether or not we have children. They remind us that the loss of a child is a loss for us all. And they know we have the power to do something about it.

We do have the power to teach our children the right values, to build strong communities, to crack down on those who use guns to commit crimes. But the key to our success in this, as in so many areas, has got to be more prevention, doing more to keep guns out of the hands of children and criminals in the first place. There's no reason why we can't do that.

The Million Mom March is calling on Congress to act on the commonsense gun legislation

that has been before it for 10 months now. The bill wouldn't take away anybody's gun or make anyone miss a day during the hunting season. What it would do is to close the loophole that lets anyone buy a gun at a gun show without a background check. It would require child safety locks with all new handguns. And it would ban the import of large capacity ammunition clips, which nobody is using for sport or self-defense, and which makes a mockery of our assault weapons ban.

I think the Million Mom March is already a success, before anyone takes the first step. These people are helping to lead a grassroots effort that has already put stronger laws in place in States like California, Massachusetts, and Maryland. They're letting the gun lobby know it is no match for America's moms. But our nationwide fight won't be over tomorrow, no

matter how many march. We have so much work still to do.

Throughout our entire history as a nation every movement for social progress, every step toward safety and justice for all has been fueled by the energy and effort of ordinary citizens. The Million Mom March is the latest successor to that great American tradition. If the moms stick with it, they will succeed. They will make America a safer, more humane nation. Helping to keep guns out of the wrong hands is a Mother's Day gift we can all be proud of.

Happy Mother's Day, and thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:25 a.m. on May 12 in the Ohio Army National Guard Facility in Akron, Ohio, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 13. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 12 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks at a Rally for the Million Mom March May 14, 2000

Well, thank you very much, and good morning. First of all, I think we ought to give Christine O'Brien another hand. *[Applause]* She gave such a good speech, I was wishing she were running for Congress against some of those anti-gun-registration—*[laughter]*.

I want to thank Donna Dees-Thomases and all the organizers and all the regions and all the States and all the communities, now over 60 of them—I think about 70 now in the country, where there will be marches today.

I want to thank my long-time friend Mike Barnes of Handgun Control. And I want to thank the many, many Members of Congress who are here to march with you today, many of them over here.

I would also like to welcome you on behalf of not only Hillary and me but also Al and Tipper Gore, who have embraced this challenge with us and believe so strongly in what you are trying to do. Our families care about it.

I want to say that—I've put my notes away here—I've just one or two things I want to say. First of all, you may have noticed that when I was walking up here, this lovely Native American woman behind me started crying. That's

because her child was killed on Mother's Day. She is the second mother I have met in the last 72 hours who lost a child on Mother's Day. There are so many—there's another one.

One of the things your mothers teach you—I want to cut to the chase here; let's get down to what this is all about. One of the things your mothers teach you when you're growing up is that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Right? How many of us had our mothers tell us, "Look both ways before you cross the street. Tie your shoes before you start running. I don't want to get my shots, but an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure"—in every single way.

Now, what the argument in Washington, DC, has been, the dominant argument for the last 30 years, since we first began to discuss this, is that an ounce of prevention is totally unacceptable, and we'll try to throw 100 pounds of cure at it and hope it works out. That's the first thing I want to say. This is about prevention.

The second thing I want to say is, when I became President there were a lot of people, I think, who wondered whether the crime rate