

May 15 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

by the President. In developing this plan, where appropriate, you should consult with other relevant Government departments and agencies. The plan should designate a group of experts representing all aspects of the public safety sector, management, and labor, including law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency services officers who will submit written recommendations to you of candidates who exemplify the valor this award recognizes. Further, the plan should establish criteria for recommending nominees for the award of valor, as well as the design of the award itself. I direct

you to report back to me with this plan within 30 days.

All Americans can feel pride in the work done each and every day by those who promise to protect and serve. It is my hope that with the creation of this award of valor the efforts of public safety officers are more publicly recognized and appreciated by our Nation.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: The Executive order of June 29 on establishment of the Presidential Medal of Valor for Public Safety Officers is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision Striking Down a Provision of the Violence Against Women Act

May 15, 2000

I am deeply disappointed by the Supreme Court's decision today in *United States v. Morrison*. In this case, the Court struck down the civil remedy provision contained in the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). In 1994, as part of comprehensive crime control legislation, I signed into law the Violence Against Women Act. This historic, important piece of Federal legislation contains a broad array of groundbreaking laws to combat violence against women. VAWA passed Congress with bipartisan support.

The Supreme Court's decision today does not affect the viability of VAWA as a whole. It does not affect any of the VAWA grant programs nor does it affect Federal criminal provisions that punish interstate domestic violence and stalking crimes. The Supreme Court did, however, invalidate one important provision of the

Violence Against Women Act that gave victims of gender-motivated violence the ability to sue their attackers for lost earnings, medical expenses, and other damages. Because I continue to believe that there should be remedies for victims of gender-motivated violence, we plan to study the Supreme Court's decision in *Morrison* to determine the best means to help these victims.

VAWA has provided funds to communities across the Nation to address the tragedy of violence against women. These funds have made a crucial difference in women's lives. Unfortunately, VAWA funding is only authorized until the end of fiscal year 2000. I have made the reauthorization and strengthening of VAWA a top legislative goal for this year. If we work together, we can enact a bill that will keep women in this country safe from violence.

Remarks to the 1999 Women's National Basketball Association Champion Houston Comets

May 15, 2000

The President. Please be seated. Good afternoon, and welcome to the Rose Garden. I want to thank the Marine Brass for playing for us

and bringing us in, and also thank three Members from the Texas delegation for being here: Representative Ken Bentsen, Representative