

of all societies working together. Every bilateral donor, every multilateral lending agency, the corporate community, the foundation community, the religious community, and every host government of a developing nation must do its part to provide the leadership and resources necessary to turn this tide. It can and must be done.

There is currently no vaccine or cure for HIV/AIDS, and we are at the beginning of a global pandemic, not the end. What we see in Africa today is just the tip of the iceberg. There must be a sense of urgency to work together with our partners in Africa and around the world, to learn from both our failures and our successes, and to share this experience with those countries that now stand on the brink of disaster. Millions of lives—perhaps hundreds of millions—hang in the balance. That is why this legislation is so important.

I wish to thank and congratulate our congressional partners who worked hard to make this bipartisan legislation a reality: Representatives Leach, Lee, LaFalce, Gejdenson, Gilman, Jackson-Lee, Maloney of New York, and Pelosi, and Senators Kerry, Frist, Biden, Boxer, Durbin, Feingold, Helms, Leahy, Moynihan, and Smith of Oregon.

While I strongly support this legislation, certain provisions seem to direct the Administration

on how to proceed in negotiations related to the development of the World Bank AIDS Trust Fund. Because these provisions appear to require the Administration to take certain positions in the international arena, they raise constitutional concerns. As such, I will treat them as precatory.

The United States has been engaged in the fight against AIDS since the 1980s. Increasingly, we have come to realize that when it comes to AIDS, neither the crisis nor the opportunity to address it have borders. We have a great deal to learn from the experiences of other countries, and the suffering of citizens in our global village touches us all. The pages of history reveal moments in time when the global community came together and collectively found “the higher angels of our nature.” In a world living with AIDS, we must reach for one of those historic moments now—it is the only way to avoid paying the price later.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
August 19, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 3519, approved August 19, was assigned Public Law No. 106–264.

Statement on Overcrowding of Schools *August 21, 2000*

This year a record 53 million children will enroll in American schools, according to a new report released today by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley. Over the last 10 years, our public schools have grown by 6.6 million students, resulting in overcrowded classrooms and strained school facilities. To meet the needs of America’s growing student population, we need to build new schools and modernize existing ones.

For too long, the Republican leadership in Congress has failed to act on tax breaks pro-

posed by my administration to build and modernize 6,000 schools. They have also failed to pass my proposal to fund urgent repairs such as leaky roofs, faulty fire alarms, and inadequate furnaces at 25,000 schools across the country. I remain strongly committed to working with Members of both parties to help create safe and modern places for America’s students to learn. Our children deserve no less.

Statement on Welfare Reform August 22, 2000

On August 22, 1996, I signed landmark bipartisan welfare reform legislation, transforming our Nation's welfare system into one that requires work for time-limited assistance. Four years later we see strong evidence that this historic change is working: Welfare caseloads have been cut in half; a record proportion of people on welfare are working; and the businesses in the Welfare to Work Partnership alone have hired more than one million people off welfare.

New data released today show that welfare rolls are just half of what they were 4 years ago, and the percentage of Americans on welfare is at the lowest level in 35 years. My administration will send a report to Congress today that shows all States have met the welfare reform law's overall work requirements in 1999. Moreover, individuals remaining on welfare are nearly 5 times more likely to be working than they were in 1992.

I am pleased that since its launch at the White House in May 1997, the Welfare to Work Partnership has enlisted more than 20,000 businesses who have hired an estimated 1.1 million former welfare recipients. As many of these companies have learned, welfare recipients are productive workers who want a hand up, not a handout. With Vice President Gore's leadership, the Federal Government has also done

its part, hiring nearly 50,000 former welfare recipients at a time when the Federal Government is the smallest it has been in 40 years.

In 4 short years, we have seen a new emphasis on work and responsibility, as welfare recipients themselves have risen to the challenge and made welfare what it was meant to be: a second chance, not a way of life. As we celebrate how far we've come, we must not forget that there is still more to do. Working together, we must build on our progress and help even more families become self-sufficient. That is why I am challenging the Welfare to Work Partnership to link even more welfare recipients, community-based organizations, and employers in communities around the Nation—helping more businesses find qualified workers and more welfare recipients and other new workers succeed in our booming economy. I urge State and local officials to use the resources and flexibility provided through welfare reform to invest in supports for both current recipients and low-income working families. And I call on Congress to join me in promoting work and responsibility by enacting my budget proposals to make work pay, encourage savings, promote responsible fatherhood, and expand access to child care, housing, transportation, and health care.

Remarks at a Reception for Senatorial Candidate Representative Debbie Stabenow in Bingham Farms, Michigan August 22, 2000

Thank you very, very much. I want to begin by saying thank you to Brian and Jennifer for opening their home. This is such a beautiful place. And the backyard is wonderful, and the weather has cooperated. It's an omen, Debbie.

I want to thank Senator Carl Levin for being here. I wish I could tell you all the times over the last 8 years that I have seen Carl Levin time and time again stand up on the floor of the Senate and do the right thing, not only for Michigan but for the people of the United

States. He is a magnificent United States Senator, and he deserves a good fight—[inaudible].

I don't know if John Conyers is here. I heard he was coming. Hello, John; it's nice to see you. Let me say that one of the corollary benefits of electing five more, six more Democrats to the House of Representatives is that John Conyers will be the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, and it will be a credit to the United States. And I thank you.

Millie, I'm glad to see you. You look good in that Medal of Freedom. [Laughter] And you