

Sept. 28 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

Statement on the Circuit Court Decision on Affirmative Action in Federal Transportation Construction Contracting September 28, 2000

This week in *Adarand Constructors, Inc. v. Slater*, the tenth circuit upheld the constitutionality of a major affirmative action program dealing with Federal transportation construction contracting. I am very pleased with the court's decision. It strongly affirms what I have consistently stated: Federal affirmative action programs

are still needed to remedy past and present discrimination and can be implemented in a constitutional manner. My administration has worked very hard to mend, but not end, Federal affirmative action programs, and we are gratified that the court has validated our efforts.

Statement on Progress in Providing Health Insurance Coverage September 28, 2000

New data released today by the Census Bureau show that the number of Americans without health insurance dropped significantly last year—the first such decline in 12 years. The 1.7 million decline in the uninsured—including over 1 million children—is making a real difference in these Americans' lives. It means that they are likely to receive needed medical care, less likely to be hospitalized for avoidable conditions like pneumonia or uncontrolled diabetes, and less likely to rely on an emergency room as their primary source of care. Clearly, access to affordable, high-quality insurance makes a difference.

I am extremely pleased with today's announcement. I believe it validates our health care and economic policies, which have helped the country begin to reverse the unacceptable numbers of uninsured in this country. I am particularly proud that the enactment of the Children's Health Insurance Program and our success in maintaining a strong economy—which led to increases in employer-based coverage—have laid the foundation for this turnaround.

Although I am pleased with today's development, there is much work to be done. The data from this report well document that the States that most aggressively conducted outreach campaigns to eligible populations have been the most successful at enrolling children. We need to encourage States that are not doing as well to accelerate their activities in reaching out to uninsured children. And we need to provide targeted programs to build on our success.

Today I want to once again call on the Congress to pass my bipartisan health care coverage initiative, including the Vice President's proposal to expand coverage to parents, as well as our initiatives that would expand coverage to 55- to 65-year-olds, workers between jobs, employees of small businesses, and legal immigrants. My balanced budget shows that we have the resources to do this while still paying down the debt by 2012. It's long past time that we take the next step towards expanding coverage and making the Nation's uninsured one of our top priorities.

Statement on the Death of Pierre Trudeau September 28, 2000

I was deeply saddened to learn today of the death of Pierre Trudeau. As Prime Minister for nearly a generation, Pierre Trudeau opened a

dynamic new era in Canadian politics and helped establish Canada's unique imprint on the global stage. I know his passing will be felt