

and seize our common opportunities together. It's hard to imagine how that future will work if China is not a part of it.

So to every one of you, from every part of America, those in Congress and those who lobbied the Congress, I hope for a long time to come you will remember this day and be proud of what you did to bring it about. And I hope and believe that our children and grandchildren will be the beneficiaries of your labors.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:52 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks,

the President referred to former Secretary of Commerce William M. Daley; and National Defense Commission First Vice Chairman Cho Myong-nok and President Kim Chong-il of North Korea. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Speaker of the House J. Dennis Hastert, Senator William V. Roth, Jr., Representative Bill Archer, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, and Representative Charles B. Rangel. H.R. 4444, approved October 10, was assigned Public Law No. 106-286.

Statement on Signing the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act

October 10, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act, which significantly strengthens efforts to make America's beaches clean, safe, and healthy. America's coasts are not only a natural treasure—they are also the number one destination for vacationing families, making their health vital to our Nation's tourism industry. Yet each year, pollution forces thousands of beach closures or health advisories. The Beach Act will ensure that in the future fewer families arrive at the beach only to discover that it is too polluted for fishing or swimming. It requires States to adopt enforceable standards for water quality, regularly test coastal waters for health-threatening pollution, and notify the public of unsafe

conditions. In addition, it provides assistance to States to carry out these efforts.

This act builds on my administration's strong efforts to ensure healthier beaches and cleaner coastal waters, greater protection for endangered and threatened marine species, sound fisheries management, and support for marine protected areas. I urge Congress to fully fund ocean and coastal conservation programs for the coming fiscal year so that communities around the country may enjoy healthy beaches and clean waters for years to come.

NOTE: H.R. 999, approved October 10, was assigned Public Law No. 106-284.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Health Care Legislation

October 10, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

I am writing to express my serious concerns that the Congressional Republican Leadership is preparing to pass unjustifiably large Medicare health maintenance organization (HMO) payment increases while preventing passage of a strong Patients' Bill of Rights. Managed care reform in the 106th Congress should focus on

patient protections, not on excessive payments to managed care plans. Moreover, these reimbursement increases are effectively diverting resources from critically important health care priorities.

This past weekend marked the 1-year anniversary of the overwhelmingly bipartisan passage of the Norwood-Dingell Patients' Bill of Rights.