

are realizing the dream of owning their own home. Higher homeownership rates help build stronger families, create more stable communities, and raise living standards for all Americans.

Vice President Gore and I came to office committed to a strategy to make it easier for American families to buy their own homes. By providing record levels of homeownership loan assistance, increasing the availability of afford-

able housing, providing incentives to save for a home purchase, and maintaining our commitment to fiscal discipline that has kept interest rates low, we have worked to ensure that every family has the opportunity to own their own home. I would like to particularly thank Vice President Gore and Secretary Cuomo for their excellent leadership in working with families, especially in low-income and empowerment communities, to help make homeownership a reality.

Statement on Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act *October 26, 2000*

Older Americans all across the country have reason to cheer today. After more than 5 years of congressional inaction, the Senate voted to approve legislation to reauthorize the Older Americans Act. I look forward to signing this measure of vital importance to our Nation's older Americans.

The Older Americans Act ensures that seniors in every State have access to meals, nursing home ombudsmen, legal assistance, elder abuse prevention, employment and transportation services that are essential to their dignity and independence. Enactment of the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000 will strengthen and improve these services.

I am especially pleased that the final legislation includes the National Family Caregiver Support Program—a key administration priority designed to provide respite care and other supportive services to help hundreds of thousands of families who are struggling to care for their older loved ones who are ill or disabled.

I applaud the bipartisan leadership in the U.S. Senate for its outstanding efforts to approve the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000. Finally, and most important, I want to pay special tribute to the aging community for its tireless commitment to the needs of older Americans.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Counterdrug Assistance to Colombia and Neighboring Countries *October 26, 2000*

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I hereby report, in accordance with section 3202 of the Military Construction Appropriations Act, 2001, on current U.S. policy and strategy for counterdrug assistance to Colombia and neighboring countries. The enclosed report sets forth the rationale for expanded support to Colombia and neighboring countries and highlights the comprehensive initiatives now underway in the Andean region in support of the National Drug Control Strategy.

Colombia's success in combating the threat of drugs is profoundly in the interest of the

United States. A peaceful, democratic, and economically prosperous Colombia will result in a significant reduction of the supply of illicit drugs and help promote democracy and stability throughout the hemisphere. I am proud of the bipartisan effort that has made our Colombian initiative possible.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations;