

Finally, the bill would allow nearly 700,000 immigrants who have worked, lived, and paid taxes in the United States for years to stay here legally without fear of being separated from their families.

When I outlined our budget priorities in the State of the Union last January, I urged Congress to work with me to pass a fiscally responsible budget that would be true to our values and invest in the capacity and future of the American people. I recall the good advice of President Theodore Roosevelt, who said that a growing nation with a future takes the long look ahead. This budget takes the long look ahead, to educate our children, renew our communities,

and build our common future. I am very proud of it and very grateful. If we stay on this course, our best days are ahead.

Thank you very much. Now I'd like the Congress and the members of the administration to come up.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:03 p.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. H.R. 4577, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2001, approved December 21, incorporating H.R. 5656, the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001, was assigned Public Law No. 106-554.

Statement on Action To Reduce Diesel Emissions

December 21, 2000

A year ago today I announced the toughest air pollution standards for new cars and sport utility vehicles. Today we take another bold step to clean our air. We are adopting strong new measures to dramatically reduce unhealthy and unsightly emissions from trucks and buses powered by diesel fuel. Together, these actions represent the most sweeping effort ever to protect our air and our health from the pollution caused by the vehicles we drive. They ensure that by the end of the decade, every new car, truck, and SUV in America will be up to 95 percent cleaner than those on the road today.

Today's action by the Environmental Protection Agency mandates cleaner diesel fuel and extends the latest pollution control technology to all trucks and buses for the first time. These

advances will prevent not only the thick plumes of diesel exhaust all too familiar to motorists but also thousands of cases of respiratory illness and premature deaths. We will spare thousands of children and elderly the agony of asthma and bronchitis and help to fulfill the promise of clean, healthy air for every American.

For the past 8 years, Vice President Gore and I have been guided by the conviction that a strong economy and a healthy environment go hand in hand. Indeed, our Nation entered the 21st century enjoying both unprecedented prosperity and the cleanest air and water in a generation. Our actions a year ago and today will help ensure an even safer and more prosperous future for generations yet to come.

Statement on Signing the Departments of Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001

December 21, 2000

Today I am signing into law H.R. 4942, the Departments of Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001. I commend the Congress for approving a bill that provides critical funding for enforcing our Nation's laws, protecting our pre-

cious natural resources, promoting international peace, and supporting our diplomatic operations.

Many portions of the Act are considerably improved compared to the previous House and Senate versions. I appreciate and commend the Congress for the many changes that have been