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get comprehensive health care reform through and that he'll spend the recess looking for ways to make progress on health care. Is that acceptable to you? Is there any point at which you would accept, or which you would take off your veto threat?

The President. Well, he's coming over here to see me today, and I think I better talk to him. I have talked to, oh, four or five other Senators in the last day or so since the crime bill passed last night. And a number of them who are strong supporters of health reform think that we ought to give this break a few days to occur and give Senator Mitchell and Senator Chafee and a couple of others a chance to talk before we make any decision.

I certainly don't want to embrace an approach that will do more harm than good and that won't achieve our objectives. But let's see what they're doing; let's see what people are feeling like after they get a night's sleep or two. These folks went through an awful lot here the last couple of weeks, and it may be that the long road they had to walk through—crime—was in part made longer by people who were working the timetable.

But they did it, and they deserve a lot of credit. And one of the things that this crime bill shows—this is a big, sweeping, complex piece of legislation that's really good for America. And it shows that it is possible to do something like this in what has been too often a too partisan environment. So I'm not prepared to make a final judgment on that at this time.

Q. Mr. President, you said just a moment ago that you didn't want to embrace an approach that would do more harm than good. That sounds like you'd be willing to wait.

The President. Well, I think the less I say right now, the better. Let me talk to Senator Mitchell. This debate is now going on in the Congress. It depends on what Congress is capable of producing. And I think we need to wait on that. That's the counsel I've been given by a number of Senators who do want health care reform and want it as quickly as we can get it. They think we ought to let the dust settle a couple of days and give Senator Mitchell a chance to do a little talking with some others for a couple of days, and then we'll see where we are.

Cuba

Q. Mr. President, do you think you've stemmed the tide of the Cuban refugees?

The President. Well, we're working at it, that's all I can tell you. I'm encouraged that the numbers are down. The weather may or may not have something to do with that. We have made it clear that we're willing to discuss, through the appropriate channels, the whole issue of immigration. And we do have laws on the books which will permit us to do some more on legal immigration than we have done. So we're working at this.

And I just want to say what I said yesterday: The Attorney General's doing a great job; the Immigration and Naturalization Service folks are doing a good job. We just need to be calm, steady, and firm, and I think we'll work through it just fine.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:20 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on Signing the Hazardous Materials Transportation Authorization Act of 1994

August 26, 1994

I am very pleased today to sign H.R. 2178, the ''Hazardous Materials Transportation Authorization Act of 1994.'' This accomplishes two important objectives of my Administration—reducing outmoded and unnecessary Government regulation and enhancing public safety on our Nation's roads.

This is the second piece of important legislation that I have approved this summer to reduce unnecessary government regulation of the trucking industry, thereby helping to keep our economy strong and competitive. Title VI of the Federal Aviation Administration Authorization Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–305) removed the heavy burden of inconsistent State regulation of the trucking industry, which costs consumers up to $8 billion a year in added freight transportation costs for virtually everything we buy. Title II of the Act that I am signing today provides additional regulatory reforms at the Federal level.

Title II will greatly reduce the massive Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) paperwork burdens faced by the trucking industry, while preserving existing Federal safety regulations. The Act also continues the process of streamlining the ICC's programs, and requires a study of how to do even more to reduce further the scope of regulatory requirements that have outlived their usefulness. I expect the Secretary of Transportation and the Chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission to be both deliberate and thorough in identifying the remaining reforms that are necessary.

In addition to streamlining regulatory requirements, this Act authorizes a strong Federal program to regulate hazardous materials transportation. It authorizes additional appropriations for the training of emergency response personnel; makes Indian tribes eligible for emergency response planning grants; and ensures that the National Intelligent Vehicle Highway System Program addresses the use of its technologies to promote hazardous materials safety. These measures will promote the continued safe transportation of hazardous materials and aid in our efforts to increase the safe operation of all commercial motor vehicles.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
August 26, 1994.

NOTE: H.R. 2178, approved August 26, was assigned Public Law No. 103–311. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

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

August 26, 1994

Today I have signed into law, H.R. 4603, the "Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, FY 1995, and Supplemental Appropriations for FY 1994."

This Act provides funding for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State; the Judiciary; and several smaller agencies.

This Act marks a bold first step in our effort to combat violent crime in America. In this Act, the Congress has provided $2.3 billion in funding to support the key new programs in the newly-passed Crime Bill. Foremost, the bill makes good on the promise of the Crime Bill by providing $1.3 billion to begin putting 100,000 new police officers on the street over the next 6 years.

The Act will enable the Justice Department to escalate its efforts to secure the border and to control illegal immigration. Resources are provided to expand the number of agents at high-risk crossing points to deter illegal immigration, improve the equipment available to agents to increase their effectiveness, expedite deportations of criminal illegal aliens, and increase asylum adjudications. The Act also provides, for the first time, a funding source to help States that are burdened by large numbers of criminal illegal aliens in their prisons. This $130 million initiative highlights the Federal Government's commitment to share the responsibility for reducing the fiscal impact of illegal immigration with affected States.

A total of $100 million is provided to States to upgrade their criminal records databases, continuing implementation of the Brady Bill to ensure that handguns stay out of the hands of criminals. Innovative programs such as boot camps and drug courts are supported to promote cost-effective methods of dealing with young nonviolent offenders. Finally, funds are provided to stop or penalize those criminals who prey, intentionally, on women.

This Act, coupled with the Crime Bill, will provide the foundation for our bold new strategy of fighting crime in the United States.

The Act also provides important funding for some of my investment priorities, including development of the information highway, the defense conversion projects of the Economic Development Administration, and projects to foster high technology at the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

In addition to providing important funding for fiscal year 1995, the Act provides urgently needed emergency funding for fiscal year 1994. Due to an increased need for disaster assistance, stemming primarily from the Northridge earthquake in California and the