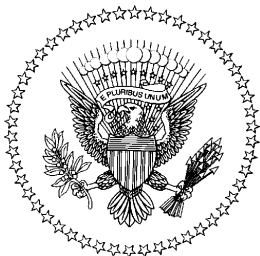


Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, August 26, 1996
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WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, August 23, 1996

The President's Radio Address

August 17, 1996

Good morning. This year the American people are being offered a clear choice of economic plans, two very different visions of how to help our economy grow. This morning I want to talk with you about my plan for our Nation's economy, about the differences between my plan and the plan offered by our opponents, and how we can keep the American dream alive as we move toward the 21st century.

This is a very hopeful time for our country. Our Nation's enduring mission is to give every American opportunity, to demand responsibility from all of our citizens, and to come together as a community. We must go forward into this new century together.

One of the things that helps us is a growing economy. A growing economy helps make all those values—opportunity, responsibility, and community—real for our families, our children, for all Americans.

As America prepares itself for the possibilities of the new century, they seem unlimited. But 4 years ago that wasn't so clear. Our economy was drifting then. New jobs were scarce; unemployment was 7.7 percent. Our budget deficit was at a record high and growing.

I took office determined to set our country on a new course, and that is what we did, cutting the deficit by 60 percent, investing in our people, expanding exports to record levels. And today we see the results. America is making more cars than Japan for the first time in a decade. We have 900,000 new construction jobs. There are hundreds of thousands of businesses owned by women. In fact, now, one in three businesses are owned by a woman.

Four point four million Americans have become homeowners. Another 10 million have refinanced their mortgages at lower rates. The combined rates of inflation, unem-

ployment, and mortgages is at a 28-year low. The budget deficit is now the smallest it's been since 1981, and our economy has created over 10 million new jobs.

Finally, real hourly wages—the paycheck of the American worker—these wages are starting to rise again for the first time in a decade. As even our opponents have acknowledged, our economy is the soundest it's been in a generation.

This opportunity strategy is working. But now we have to build on it, to produce faster growth, more high-paying jobs, more successful businesses, to bring the benefits of economic growth to those who have not yet experienced them. First, we have to finish the job of balancing the budget so that we can keep interest rates down and remove the debt burden from future generations. Then we have to give our people education and training, access to health care, and retirement security, so all working people can reap the rewards of this new economy.

This week I will sign into law an increase in the minimum wage. For those who work hard to stay off welfare but can't live on \$4.25 an hour, this is a very important act. It will truly honor work and family. The same bill also provides help to small businesses to help them increase investment in job creation and to increase their ability to save for retirement.

Next, we should give Americans a tax cut. We've already cut taxes for 15 million American working families through our dramatic expansion of the earned-income tax credit. This year that tax deduction will be worth about \$1,000 to a family of four with an income of \$28,000 a year or less. Now, we can, and we should, do more.

In going forward I have proposed a program of tax cuts for working families that focus on education and childrearing and are clearly within our ability to balance the budget so we can continue to keep those interest rates down and the economy growing. That's

very important if we want our families to be strong and successful.

On the tax cut front I think, first, we should give tax cuts to pay for a college education. I have proposed giving individuals a \$1,500 tax credit each year to pay for 2 years of college tuition, a Hope Scholarship that will entirely pay for tuition at a typical community college. We have to make 2 years of education after high school as universal as a high school education is now.

And going beyond that, I proposed giving families a tax deduction for up to \$10,000 a year for the tuition of all college costs, going beyond just the first 2 years. Over and above that, I have proposed collapsing all the Federal training programs into a "GI bill" for America's workers, so that those who are unemployed or underemployed can get a skills grant worth up to \$2,600 a year to pursue their education. This is a good, good foundation on building a network of lifetime learning that all American families will need to succeed in the global economy.

The second thing we need to do is to give parents of children under the age of 13 a \$500 per child tax credit to help them to pay for child care. This also is very important.

Thirdly, we ought to give people a tax cut through expanded IRA's that people can use to withdraw from without penalty in a way that helps them save not only for their retirement but also for a first-time home, for medical care, or for a college education.

That's our program: targeted tax cuts; continuing to invest in education and research and new technologies; continuing to cut the deficit and balance the budget; expanding exports to record levels. This is the plan that will work. We know this growth strategy works. It's already produced over 10 million new jobs, a very different situation than existed under the previous policy.

Now, as you know, our opponents are offering a very different strategy, but it's the same one they've offered before. And our plans are very different. My tax cut is limited in size; it's worth \$110 billion. Theirs is 5 times as much, \$550 billion. We can afford ours. We can't afford theirs.

My tax cut is targeted. Theirs is indiscriminate. Mine will be there when the middle class families need it to help them give their

children an education, buy a home, pay for child care. Our opponents' plan gives indiscriminate tax cuts, regardless of the cost. In fact, millions of middle class families with children in college or with adults in educational programs would actually get a bigger tax cut under my plan than under our opponents' plan.

And my tax cut is paid for with specific, tough budget cuts consistent with the balanced budget plan. Our opponents haven't said how they'll pay for their tax cut yet.

Now, if they don't pay for it, their plan would balloon the deficit. That would increase interest rates, and that would slow down the economy and cost us jobs. Our plan, by contrast, would clearly help the economy. Higher interest rates under their plan would cancel out the tax benefits for most families. Under our plan, interest rates would come down because the budget will be balanced just as people are getting their tax cuts.

On the other hand, if our opponents do pay for this massive tax cut, that would mean even bigger cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment than they have already proposed. My plan pays for tax cuts without undermining our values. Their plan would deeply cut Medicare. My plan would not require new out-of-pocket costs for beneficiaries to pay for tax cuts. Their plan would undermine Medicaid's guarantee of quality health care to pregnant women, poor children, to families with people with disabilities, and to the elderly. My plan would preserve Medicaid's guarantee for these groups of Americans.

Their plan would cut education. My plan would cut taxes while increasing investments in education. Their plan would endanger the environment. My plan would cut taxes while continuing to clean up pollution and make our environment cleaner.

So the American people have a clear choice in this election. We agree on one thing: Americans do deserve a tax cut. But we must choose between a tax cut that responsibly balances the budget and one that puts our economy at risk; between one that is targeted to help working families pay for education, health care, and other pressing needs, and one that is indiscriminate; be-

tween one that is paid for by prudently cutting Government, and one that is paid for by undercutting Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment, or not paid for at all, bringing back those bad old days of out of control deficits, high interest rates, slow growth, or recession.

I look forward to discussing these plans before the American people in the coming months. This election will give our Nation the chance to decide whether we want to continue forward on a path of opportunity, responsibility, work, and growth. That kind of debate can only be good for our country.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:40 p.m. on August 16 at the Chapman Ranch in Jackson Hole, WY, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 17.

Remarks to the Community in Idaho Falls, Idaho

August 17, 1996

Thank you so much. Thank you. I'm glad to see you. Thank you. First of all, let me thank—

[*At this point, the audience sang "Happy Birthday."*]

Thank you very much. Thank you all for coming out. Hillary and Chelsea and I are delighted to see you. I even thank you for singing "Happy Birthday" to me. I've been a little apprehensive about turning 50 and getting my AARP card, but the music makes it a little easier to bear. We've had a wonderful family vacation in the West; we go back East refreshed, ready to go to work.

I just wanted to say to all of you that next week will be a good week for our country. I'll have a chance to sign a bill that increases the minimum wage and increases tax incentives. [*Applause*] Thank you. The bill also—a lot of people don't know this—the bill also increases incentives, tax incentives for small-business people to invest in their business and makes it easier for small-business people and their employees to take out and keep retirement plans, even during periods when they're not employed. So it's a great bill for America; it's a good thing.

And I have a chance to sign a bill next week that says you don't lose your health insurance if somebody in your family gets sick or if you change jobs, the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill. And of course, the welfare reform bill, which will give States more funds for child care and for health care, and then require people who can to move from welfare to work.

It'll be a very good week for America. And all those bills passed with very strong bipartisan majorities. I can only say that I wish we had more of that in Washington, and I know you do, too. But I am very, very happy, I'm delighted to be here. I love seeing all these signs here. You've made us very, very happy, and we'd like to come out and say hello to you in time for this plane to leave.

Thank you, and God bless you, Idaho. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:10 p.m. at Fenning Field. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on Departure for New York City and an Exchange With Reporters

August 18, 1996

Air Force Transport Crash

The President. Before I leave, I'd just like to say how very sad and shocked Hillary and I were to receive word early this morning of the crash of the Air Force transport plane coming out of Wyoming. There are always significant dangers associated with our Armed Forces, the people in our Secret Service, and others who do this work, but this is especially painful to us because they worked for me. They did an invaluable service, and I'm very, very sad about it.

The local law enforcement people are on the ground doing the search now. I have sent an Air Force team of inspectors there. We do not know what caused the crash at this time. And I think for the moment, I'd just like to say that our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the people who were lost, along with our everlasting gratitude.

Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, can you confirm reports that the pilot may have been having mechanical difficulties and—

The President. When I got—I cannot confirm any final reports. Last night—maybe it was 2:30 this morning, quarter to three, it was about that time when I got a call. I was told that they thought the pilot had turned around to come back to the airport. And that’s the last—that’s the last word I have on the facts. But we should be able to tell you more by the end of the day, because they’re out there.

“60 Minutes” Interview

Q. Happy birthday, Mr. President. Did you lay a glove on Dole in the interview?

The President. I don’t have any idea. You all watch it and tell me. I wouldn’t know. But I’m just happy to be here—still standing—at 50.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:24 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee 50th Birthday Reception for the President in New York City August 18, 1996

The President. Thank you.

Audience member. Cut cake, but don’t cut welfare!

Audience members. Boo-o-o! Go away!

The President. Wait, wait, wait. They’ve had their say. Now, we’ve heard—wait, wait. They got their message. We heard them. Give them an applause, and let them go now. Give them a hand, give them applause. [Applause] Thank you. All right, we got you an audience. We did do that, also. Now, please let me talk.

Audience member. You don’t represent poor working people! Stop the—[inaudible]—against the poor!

The President. Well, all I know is I just got the minimum wage raised. And we cut income taxes on the 15 million poorest working families in America. And there are 1.3 million fewer people on welfare today than there were the day I became President. So I think we’ve got a pretty good claim on that.

Let me begin by thanking Chairman Don Fowler. I know he said before I came out a word, but I’d like to say another word of respect and condolence to the families of those who were on that Government airplane, the Air Force plane that was carrying those who work with me on my security detail out there in Wyoming. It’s a very sad thing. One of the safest planes we ever had. We don’t yet know what happened, but tonight I just ask you to be thinking about their families.

And let me also say to the people who provided our music, to Smokey Joe’s Cafe, and to the Cravat’s Orchestra, I’ve been out here listening while you all have been in here enjoying it directly, and you know, if you’re President, when you stand up in front of people, you’re always afraid that you’re not supposed to be on one foot; you’re not supposed to be snapping your fingers; you’re not supposed to be doing all these things. So I can really enjoy this music better if I’m out there, and you’re not looking at me; we’re all paying attention to the music.

You guys were great. Thank you very much, and we’re grateful to you.

I know that Governor Carey is in the audience tonight. And Carolyn McCarthy, our new candidate for Congress, is here. I wish her well. I believe Mark Green and Judith Hope are here, and I thank you for being here. And somebody told me two people I very much admire for their different gifts with the English language, Neil Simon and Arthur Schlesinger, are here. If they’re here, I welcome them, and thank you very much.

Ladies and gentlemen, I feel very grateful tonight to be on the verge of my 50th birthday. I don’t know why I feel grateful for that. [Laughter] I have been getting all of these absolutely hilarious cards. I got one card I couldn’t begin to figure out. There were nine people in black robes on it and Mr. Perot was on it and Diana Ross was on it. And it said, “Happy birthday from Diana Ross and the Supremes.” [Laughter] I got a card today pointing out that as bad as this is, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, and Ringo Starr are older than I am. [Laughter] So I’m getting all of these cards, trying to put the best face on this event. I’m going to be all right until I get my AARP card in the mail.

[*Laughter*] And there will be a couple of bad hours there.

Let me—you know, our friends in the Republican Party that had their convention last week—and I didn't watch it because I was too busy on vacation, but they've had their say and now we can have ours. And I wanted—I just wanted to say to you that when we have our convention in Chicago next week, I have told our people that I don't want anybody standing up at the platform at the Democratic Convention making demeaning personal remarks about any Republican, not their nominee, not their nominee's wife, not any of them.

On the other hand, since they neglected to talk about their record for the last 2 years, I think we ought to remind people about that every chance we get and remind everyone that this is really a great contest between two different visions of the future. There is no status quo option. Neither of us believe that we can stay with what we did for 40 or 50 years. But on the other hand, there are very different consequences to where we will go in the future.

Now, this administration can be proud that, compared to 4 years ago, there are 10 million more jobs, there are a record number of new small businesses, including businesses owned by women and minorities, there are a record number of exports. We've had 4 years in a row where the crime rate went down. There are 60,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers that could not get handguns because of the Brady bill. And as I said a moment ago, we dramatically cut taxes for the 15 million American working families with incomes of \$28,000 a year or less who are the most hard pressed and reduced the welfare rolls by 1.3 million—all that compared to 4 years ago.

The average closing cost on a home for first-time homebuyers has been cut by \$1,000. We have almost 4½ million new homeowners; 10 million American families refinanced their homes. Things are better than they were 4 years ago.

And the most important thing to know is that the leaders of the other party, their nominee for President, their Speaker of the House—they fought us on the economic program; they fought us on the crime bill; they

fought us on the Brady bill; they fought us on the family and medical leave law; they fought us on the things that we tried to do that made a difference for America. The results are in: We're better off than we were. We need to keep going where we're going, not take a great U-turn and go back in the other direction.

And the second point I want to make to you is that this is not an election like most elections where there's a little guesswork involved. This is your birthday present. You get a Presidential election where you don't have to guess. I mean, if you think about it, there's normally some guesswork in any election. You took a chance on me 4 years ago. Those of you who knew me, maybe it wasn't such a big chance, but most people didn't.

Well, now people know what we've done for the last 4 years, and they know that I'll do everything I can to implement these plans that we put before the American people. And they know what the Republicans will do because, even though they did not talk about it at their convention, apparently, they've already done it once. I just vetoed it the first time. [*Laughter*] And so that's a very happy thing.

So if you look at these choices, the choice is not the standard choice. This is not between, for example, as they would say, cutting taxes and balancing the budget. I'm not against cutting taxes. I'm just against cutting taxes if to do it, you have to explode the deficit again after we took it from \$290 billion down to \$116 billion a year or if you have to cut Medicare and Medicaid, education, and the environment to pay for it. That would be wrong. That would be wrong.

So, if you like the budget I vetoed, you will love the next one that's coming along with this new plan. If you didn't, stay with us. We'll balance the budget and invest in education and invest in protecting the environment and protect Medicare and Medicaid while reforming them so that we can all preserve them over the long term. And we will give the American people the right sort of tax cut, targeted to education, sending everybody to college, raising children, and giving people incentives to save for their own retirement, their own health care, their own educational needs. That is the right thing to do

for America. We do not want to take a dramatic turn in the wrong direction.

Finally, let me say that there are a lot of things that have to be done in the future, and I want you to think about that. I want you to think about what the family and medical leave law has meant to America: 12 million American families, someone in the family got to take a little time off when there was a baby born or a sick parent or a sick child without losing their jobs. I'd like to see that extended so that parents could go to regular parent conferences and doctor's appointments with their children, without losing their jobs.

If you look at what happened—if you look at the results that we've gotten with the Brady bill, the assault weapons ban, and the plan to put 100,000 police on the street, I'd like to see that expanded so that we can ban those cop-killer bullets that have no purpose other than to knock our police officers and other innocent citizens out of their lives.

If you look at what we did with the college loan program to make more college loans available to people and more scholarships available at lower cost, I'd like to see that expanded to give American families a tax credit of \$1,500 a year so that every single American adult could at least get a community college education, and it would be as universal as a high school education is today, and we have tax deductions for the costs of college education for everybody.

So there's a lot more to do here. But our country is stronger; we are more respected in the world; we are a larger force for peace and freedom and decency than we were.

And let me just say one last thing about this welfare issue. I've been working on this since 1980. And about 10 years ago when I was trying to write the last welfare reform bill, I asked a woman from my State who had moved from welfare to work to come be a part of a panel that I had for the Governors; this was nearly a decade ago. And this lady was asked the following question, and I did not know—she was being questioned by other Governors. I didn't have a clue about what she was going to say. I just knew that she had been a successful graduate of our experiment.

And this lady was asked, "Do you believe that people should be required to move from welfare to work if there is a job there and if they can take care of their kids?" She said, "I certainly do." And so the questioner said, "Well, why?" She said, "Well, because people like me have been treated like we can't do anything for so long, we'll just keep on doing nothing unless somebody requires us to do it but also gives us the help to do it." And then they said, "Well, what's the best thing about having a job?" And she said, "Well, the best thing is not the check. It's when my boy goes to school, and they say, what does your mama do for a living, he can give an answer."

Now, what I have done in signing this bill is to give us a chance to move everybody from welfare to work, but we're all thinking about this in the wrong way. This welfare reform issue is not over; it is just beginning. It is just beginning.

So those folks holding those signs up and everybody else ought to be thinking about this: Who do you trust to give jobs to those people? Who do you trust to take care of their children? Who do you trust to implement this instead of turning around and walking away from it?

Remember, the bills I vetoed—that you know what they did, the bills I vetoed? No child care; take away the guarantees of the school lunch program; take away the guarantees of the food stamp program; take away the guarantees of health care for children with disabilities. That's what they tried to do. I vetoed all that.

We got that back in. We got protections back in. The question is now how are we going to embark on this great experiment to put jobs in the inner cities and jobs in the isolated rural areas and give people something to do? You can't just put people in the street. You have to give them work and child care and health care to support them. That is my commitment, and that is the decision we ought to be facing in this election.

So let me just say this last point. This is my birthday gift to you. I want you to think about it for 79 days. [Laughter] I did an interview with one of the most highly watched news programs in the country, showing just in a couple of hours here, today before I

came up. And the questioner said, "Well, Mr. President, aren't you worried about what happened after the convention and this big tax cut promise and the movement in the polls, and doesn't that really bother you?" And I said, "No." I said, "I'm not against a tax cut. I just don't want one that's too big, that we can't pay for. I don't want one that's big and indiscriminate, that will either explode the deficit or force us to really hurt people with more cuts in education and the environment and Medicare and Medicaid. But we can have a tax cut targeted at childrearing and education and family savings, and pay for it. But I'm not worried about that."

He said, "Well, what if it causes all these changes in the polls? Everybody else that's ever run on one has won." I said, "Well, first of all, it's a false choice between a tax cut and no tax cut. The issue is, are you going to have a good one that you can pay for?"

I said, "You know, Hillary and I used to live around the corner when we were living in Arkansas from this wonderful place called the Community Bakery." I used to go down there all the time, and in the morning I'd buy bagels. [Laughter] Sometimes on the weekend I'd buy other things, but there were wonderful things in the Community Bakery. [Laughter] There were cookies, bagels, doughnuts, fruit tarts. And so I was telling this fellow; I said, "You know, every one of them was good, but if you bought them all and ate them all at once you'd get sick. That's my attitude about this tax cut issue. We can have one, but we have to have what we can afford, that's consistent with balancing the budget, investing in our future, bringing our people together. That is the right decision."

And then I said—and this is what I want you to think about for 79 days—"If the American people want to go back to a failed economic plan of the past that quadrupled the deficit, gave us high interest rates, increased unemployment, increased welfare, and weakened America, they can do it. But that's what the election is for." I cannot do that. I will not do that. That is the wrong thing for America. There is another choice there. I won't do that.

So my gift to you is to remember that this is a choice. And I'm delighted that you're

here to celebrate my birthday. And I'm going to have a wonderful time tonight. But I want to remind you that we have 79 more days before we can really celebrate the assurance that America will march into the 21st century with the vision I articulated in 1991 that I reaffirm to you today. I want us to go into the 21st century with three things unquestionably true. I want every child in this country, without regard to race or gender or station in life, to be able to live out his or her dreams if they're responsible enough to work for it. I want to know that our country is the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and democracy. And I want to know that with all of our incredible diversity—unlike all these other countries that are coming apart at the seams because of their racial, their religious, their ethnic, their tribal hatred—I want America to be the one country in the world that says, we believe in our common humanity, and we are growing stronger through our diversity, not weaker. That is my dream, and that's the present I want for you.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:05 p.m. in the Imperial Ballroom at the Sheraton New York Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Don Fowler, chairman, Democratic National Committee; Hugh Carey, former Governor of New York; Carolyn McCarthy, Democratic candidate for the 1st Congressional District in New York; Mark Green, New York City public advocate; Judith Hope, New York State Democratic Party chair; playwright Neil Simon; and historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee 50th Birthday Gala for the President in New York City

August 18, 1996

The President. Thank you. First of all, I just want to say I hope all of you have had just half as good a time tonight as I have. I want to thank my friend Whoopi Goldberg and all the other magnificent entertainers and Jeff Margolis, who did the production; let's give him a hand. He was great.

I know the hour is late, but I'd like to say just a thing or two. I mean, I only turn 50 once, you know. [Laughter] First of all, I feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude tonight.

A lot of times some of you will come up to me somewhere around the country when something is not going so well. You ask me how am I doing, and I've tried to develop the discipline of saying—

Audience members. Shame! Shame! Shame!

The President. Okay, okay. We hear you. You want to hear them anymore?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Okay, we've heard your message now. Thank you very much. All right, give them a hand as they exit, will you? We heard them. Give them a hand. Give them a hand. [Applause] Be nice to them; don't be rough. They don't have a right to do this, but they don't have a right to be roughed up. Just show them to the door.

Thank you.

You know, one of the greatest things about this country is you can say whatever is on your mind, and nobody can shut you up. On the other hand—

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you. Four years from now some of them will come back and say, "You know, you were right about that, Mr. President. You were right about that."

Let me say just one or two things if I might—

Audience member. Throw them out!

The President. Relax. Relax. Lay back. Anyway, even now, what I was going to tell you is I've tried to develop the discipline—when somebody comes up to me and says, "Well, how are you doing," and something is not going very well, of saying, "Better than I deserve, thank you." And you ought to think about it.

Because I was looking at all those decades pass by—I don't know where all the time went—and I was thinking of all the gifts that I have been given. I thank God for my family, for those who are here and those who aren't. I wish my brother could have been here tonight, but his wife and his son are here. I wish my wonderful father-in-law were still living; I miss him. And Lord, I miss my mother. She liked a good party, you know, and she would have liked this tonight. But I thank them. I mean, who could have thought it, where we all started.

And I thank my friends. Some of them have been subject to ridicule, you know. FOB's has become, I don't know, an epithet in some quarters. But I wouldn't be here today without them, and all of you who were there with me in each step along life's way, I thank you. I thank all of those who worked with me in every job I ever had, and all of you who helped me to come to this point. I just feel a great sense of gratitude.

I'd also like to make just two other observations in closing. The first is that I appreciate what Hillary said. I'm sure I'm not the best man she's ever known, but I sure have loved her and my wonderful child, and I thank them.

There's something that's happened in our country in the last few years that I don't think is very good. And that is that a lot of people in public life have taken to trying to show how good they are by showing how bad the people who disagree with them are, and I don't think that's a very good thing. And I have my mother to thank for that attitude, because she taught me never to resent anyone else's success, never to look down on anybody else, and never, ever to think I was better than anybody else, that it was a hard enough job in life just to be a good person yourself without trying to lift yourself up in putting somebody else down. And I'd like to see more of that in our country. I think it would be more civil and a better place.

The second thing I'd like to leave you with is the image of those children that were up here behind us. You know, we have debates from time to time—were they right or am I right about the welfare reform issue. And I disagree with my opponent, Senator Dole, on so many things. But let me ask you this: Just think about your own life here and ask yourself, why are we doing this? Why are we here? The purpose of politics is nothing more or less than to enable more kids like those kids that just sang on the stage to live their dreams the way I got to live mine. There is no other purpose here.

And I thank God for everybody I've ever been able to work with, those of you who are here. A lot of them are gone too, now. I miss my friend and brother, Ron Brown. He would have liked this tonight, and what a wonderful job he would have done.

I started out my Presidency with one of the greatest men I ever met in my life, the late Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin. I miss him so much. There are a lot of people I miss, and I'm sorry they had to leave this Earth before I did. But you know, all of us left ahead, because we got to live out our dreams. And most of us here, truth were known, we'd have to say we've done better than we deserved. And I would like for every child in this country and every child in this world to be able to say that more than they can say it now when our time here is done.

We have to get this country ready for the next century. It will be the time of greatest possibility in all of human history. More of our kids, without regard to their race, their gender, their station in life, will have a chance to live their dreams if we do our job. That is really what we're here about.

I've been luckier than most people because I had family who loved me, friends who took care of me, folks who worked with me and made me look better than I deserved, and a chance to do work I loved. But in the end, all that matters is whether, when we finish, we have made it possible for more people to be what God meant them to be. And you have helped to give me that chance, and that is the best birthday present of all.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:25 p.m. at Radio City Music Hall.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee 50th Birthday Dinner for the President in New York City

August 19, 1996

Let's give Jessye Norman a hand. That was about the best "Happy Birthday" I ever saw. [Applause] I often thought—please sit down—I often thought my birthday might resemble a soap opera, but never a real one. [Laughter] So I am deeply honored that Jessye is here tonight.

Let me say very briefly—I said what I had to say at Radio City—but I want to thank all of you from the bottom of my heart for making this night possible. I thank our hard-working Democratic Chairman Don Fowler,

and Marvin Rosen, our finance director, and all the people at DNC. They work so hard.

The chairs of this event, Jay and Maryanne Alex, Noah Dear, Beth Dozoretz, Larry Harris, Susan and Allen Patricof, Stan Schuman, Paul Verrochi, Harvey Weinstein—let's give them all a big hand. They've been great. [Applause]

I want to thank my good friend, the former Governor of Mississippi, Ray Maybus who put together all the satellite events around the country, 89 of them. Thank you, Ray. I'd like to thank the distinguished political leaders from New York who are here, former Mayor Dinkins; Congressman Rangel; Congressman Lowey; Senator Lautenberg; the minority leader of the Senate, Senator Martin Conner; and Speaker Shelly Silver; and the New York State Democratic co-chairs, Judith Hope and John Sullivan.

I think that there are a lot of other—I want to thank all of the entertainers who are still here, those who performed tonight. You were magnificent. It was a great event at Radio City Music Hall.

There is one—in addition to Jessye, there is one very great American artist here who just came in from Europe, could not be here earlier for the performance, but I think is one of the most gifted musicians of my lifetime, Mr. Wynton Marsalis is here. Thank you very much for being here.

Let me say finally that what Vernon said about the birthday present coming on November 5th is not entirely true. This is a deeply personal night for me and a great joy. I know that a lot of you worked very, very hard on this evening. You know who you are; I know who you are. I know what an enormous effort it was, and I don't know where you got some of the home movies and the pictures. If I knew where, the people who gave it to you would be in trouble, but I thought it was fabulous, and I thank you for that.

In terms of the election, I ask you only to remember that we really are going to make a decision which I think is even more important than the one we made in 1992. We have to validate the direction this country is going in. We cannot permit it to be reversed, and we cannot permit people to turn away from the fact that we are in better shape as a na-

tion than we were 4 years ago. The choice is clear about the competing visions for the future, and it's very important for us to build on the progress that has been made, not to sit on it but not to reverse it, either.

And when we go to our convention in Chicago and we're going into this campaign, I want all of you to help me elevate this campaign. I want this to be a campaign in which the American people have an honest, civil discussion with one another about how we ought to go forward into the 21st century. I don't want you to check your passion, I want you to turn it up. I don't want you to decline to say that you disagree with our opponents, when you do, and why you do, but I do not want it to be personally demeaning or negative.

You know, this is not the world's oldest democracy because every single election has been decided between a saint and a scoundrel; that is not what has happened. Our political system has worked, and we're still around here after 220 years because we had a lot of people who loved their country who had different views and, more than half the time, the American people, the majority, have made the right decision and kept us moving into the future. And that's how we ought to look at this. We don't have to demean anybody. We don't have to put anybody down. We have to lift the country up, put people together, and move into the future. And I want you to lead that. And I want you to have no amount of overconfidence. I want you to be intense, focused, and committed, because a lot is riding on it.

Finally, let me say—I want to thank a man I've known a long time and I really admire on many, many levels. But tonight, we heard his great music and the music of his orchestra. Thank you, Peter Duchin, for what you've done. Thank you. Thank you for being a good Democrat.

And lastly, Vernon, I was sitting there listening to you speak, and you about had me convinced I was a great man. [*Laughter*] I believe you could talk an owl out of a tree. And I want you to know that we did not ignore your birthday. Even though I was away aching from that—as I called it—that death march of dehydration that I took the press on when we climbed down from Mt.

Washburn in Wyoming, having been there a day and a half, we were still thinking about you. And I'd like to present you with your own birthday cake since you gave me mine.

Where is it? [*Laughter*] Happy birthday, Vernon. I love you.

Thank you, and God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at midnight in the Grand Ballroom at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to singer Jessye Norman; David Dinkins, former mayor of New York City; and Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.; dinner emcee. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Salem Missionary Baptist Church in Fruitland, Tennessee

August 19, 1996

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you very, very much. Reverend Donaldson, before the sun went underneath that cloud for a minute, I was beginning to wonder how a place so close to heaven could be so hot. [*Laughter*]

But I am very glad to be here. Hillary and I are delighted to be here with Reverend and Mrs. Donaldson, and Reverend and Mrs. Vaughan, and our good friend John Tanner, Governor McWherter, and the other folks from Tennessee public life. I also wanted to say Reverend Donaldson gave you a big plug, Mr. Barnett. He said if it hadn't been for you and the leaders of the church, you all wouldn't be here today. And I thank you, too, for what you've done. Thank you.

I want to begin my remarks by presenting to Reverend Donaldson and Reverend Vaughan a plaque with a statement I made about this whole issue not very long ago that says, "We must come together as one America to rebuild our churches, restore hope, and show the forces of hatred they cannot win." And I wanted you both to have these plaques when you reopen your church so that people all over this part of the country could see that what you have done is a symbol of the best in our faith and the best in our country.

So if you would come up. Reverend Donaldson and Reverend Vaughan, I'd like to give you these plaques.

[At this point, the President presented the plaques.]

You know, I think I'll start my brief remarks here just by picking up on something that Reverend Donaldson said about politics and differences and how he was sure that every President had done something that somebody disagreed with. After 4 years, I'm sure that every President has done something that everybody disagreed with. *[Laughter]* But part of what we're dealing with today, folks, is not only how we live our faith but how we manage our differences.

And as your President—I want you to think about this—as your President, an enormous percentage of my time in dealing with America's relationship to the rest of the world is required of people who refuse to get along with each other because of their religious, their racial, their ethnic, or their tribal differences. That is what has convulsed the Holy Land for decades now. That is what brought the people in Bosnia, after decades and decades of peace, to slaughtering each other as if they were animals for 4 years.

In Northern Ireland, the part of Ireland which ought to be the most prosperous and successful, it's what keeps Protestants and Catholics apart. They're still refighting 600-year-old battles when the kids want them to join hands and march into the future together. In Rwanda and Burundi, tribal differences have kept two small countries convulsed with mass slaughter when they ought to be trying to figure out how to feed their children.

I see this everywhere. And I thank God for the wisdom of our Founding Fathers who said, first, that people are created equal, and second, that the right to the freedom of religion is the first amendment, the first and most important right we have. And so I ask you to think about that.

I said the other day that I hoped that we could get out of the point in our politics where we trade in insults and go back to fighting over ideas, when we realize that not every election is a race between a saint and a scoundrel but instead a contest to find out

what the best truth is for our country to move forward together.

I might say in that context, I noticed one of your neighbors here who is running for the United States Senate, Houston and his wife, Debbie Gordon. I thank them for coming, and I wish you well, sir. Thank you.

I want to encourage everybody to participate in our process just as we encourage everyone to practice their faith. The genius of America is we have found a way to manage our differences and to keep coming closer to the ideals of our Constitution.

We've had our troubles, too. We've had our troubles in trying to come to grips with the fact that our Constitution was inconsistent with our practice when it said all people are created equal. We had a Civil War in this country. We had a long civil rights struggle. We had a lot of challenges. But we're still here after 220 years, stronger than ever, because we found a way to work together—not just blacks and whites anymore.

You know, when we had the Olympics and the Vice President and Tipper and Hillary and I went to Atlanta, there were representatives from 197 different nations there. Our largest county, Los Angeles County, has folks from 150 of those places in it. Now, that's an amazing thing and a great tribute to the United States.

We say, "If you come here, we'll give you the freedom to speak; we'll give you the freedom to assemble; we'll give you the freedom to move around; we'll give you the freedom of religion, but you can't look down on somebody else because they're of a different religion, a different race, a different ethnic group, a different tribe. You got to treat people as if they're equal in the eyes of God and the law."

And so, I tell you that I have spent a lot of time on this church burning issue because I think it is a test of our character as a people and because we must never even begin to go down that road that has ended in the dark alleys of slaughter in Bosnia, the continuing agony in the Middle East, and all the other places in the world where people cannot get along because they insist on living their lives by being able to look down on people because they're different from them instead of trying to lift everybody up because they're

all children of God. And we must not start down that road. We have to stamp out their feelings whenever we see them manifest.

Let's face it, every one of us at some time in our lives—not a single soul here can say that you're not guilty at some time in your life of defining yourself because you could look down on somebody else—say, "Well, I may not be perfect, but at least I'm not that person." [Laughter] "At least I'm not this, that, or the other thing." Every one of us is guilty of that. And we know there's something in human nature that makes people do that. But when it's uncontrolled, you have all this slaughter and heartache.

So Hillary and Tipper and Al and I, we've worked hard to try to rally the American people to deal with this problem of church burning because we don't even want to see it start in America. We're still around here after all these years because we believe people should be free to practice their faith. And, you know, now it's a Baptist and a Methodist church—we've had a lot of synagogues defaced; we've had three Islamic centers burned in this country, and that's not right either.

So what I want to say to you is that you're not just rebuilding your church here, you're showing America what's special about America. And by doing that, you're leading us into a brighter and better future instead of back into the kind of dark path that has divided and torn asunder so many other nations and that in times past has made America less than it ought to be.

You have given us a great gift by allowing us to come here and share this day with you, and I want to mention that too. This is a problem that's a people problem. This is an opportunity that's an opportunity of the heart and conviction. There's things that the Government has to do. We're doing everything we can to help local law enforcement officials to find out who's burned all these churches. We got guilty pleas from two former Ku Klux Klan members in South Carolina just last week. We're working to charge some others that we now know have burned some of these churches. We will spare no effort to catch and prosecute people we can find. We will follow up every lead we are given. But fundamentally, we know that this issue has to be addressed by people who live in and

around and who attend these churches and other religious institutions. This is an affair of the heart, and we celebrate today a triumph of the American spirit.

Let me say, too, that we are standing on the brink of a new century. The kids in this audience today, some of these kids will be doing jobs 20 years from now that have not been invented yet. Some of these children will be doing jobs that have not been imagined yet. People that live in little rural places, within a matter of a few years, thanks in no small measure to the work that Al Gore has done to bring the benefits of the Internet and computer technology to every classroom, every hospital, and every library in America by the year 2000, they will have access to things that no child in rural America has ever known before. And that is a wonderful thing. And our children will be able to live their dreams more than any generation of Americans before them if, but only if, we don't forget what "brung" us, as we used to say at home. [Laughter]

You know, my people come from a little place in Arkansas that looks a lot like this. And I was looking at the soybeans and the cotton and the corn—needs a little water; we'll pray for that today—[laughter]—going down these fields thinking about how wonderful it's going to be if the benefits of technology allow people to enjoy the virtues and the strength and the joys of rural life and still access the modern world. That's what I think is going to happen, as long as we don't forget what "brung" us.

And so you've given us a gift today. The Scripture says, "Much is required from those whom much is given." Well, there may not be any millionaires in this crowd today or many millionaires that are members of these two small churches, but you have shown us again the meaning of those words. You have shown us that we have more than we think and that we can give more than we think. And therefore, you've given us a chance to live the Scripture today.

That's why Tipper and I wanted to spend our birthdays here. That's why Al and Hillary wanted to be with us. And let me say, that's why our children came too.

And I want to thank Reverend Donaldson's daughter for taking such good

care of our children. We have Karenna and Sarah and Albert Gore, and our daughter Chelsea, are here, and we're all honored to be here with you today.

Every time you drive past one of these two churches from now on you think about that. When the two congregations got together, when people began to reach across the lines that divide us, when people began to reassert their belief in the freedom of religion—every time you do that you're sticking up for what's made America great for over 200 years, and you're standing up against what is tearing the heart of the rest of the world. This can be—this day, this church, that church down the road—a symbol of everything to you every time you see it that makes America the greatest country in human history.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Daniel Donaldson, pastor, Salem Baptist Church, and his wife, Athalia; Rev. Bill Vaughan, pastor, New Shiloh United Methodist Church, and his wife, Marge; Representative John Tanner; former Gov. Ned Ray McWherter of Tennessee; Lincoln Barnett, chairman, deacon board, Salem Baptist Church; Houston Gordon, Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate from Tennessee, and his wife, Debbie.

Remarks to the Community in Jackson, Tennessee

August 19, 1996

Thank you very much. Thank you for the "Happy Birthday." I have had a very happy birthday in west Tennessee, and I thank all of you for that. I thank you for coming out here. This is a vast crowd; we never had any idea there would be this kind of crowd here. They said, "Well, Mr. President, we've got to go. We need to be at the airport because we're going to have to shake hands with a few people who will be there before we leave"—a few thousand people, or maybe not even a few thousand people, several thousand people. I thank you all for coming, very much.

Hillary and Chelsea and I have had a wonderful time with Al and Tipper and Karenna and Sarah and Albert. We did go out and work on the church rebuilding today, to give us something to do to remind ourselves that,

as the Scripture says, "To those to whom much is given, much is expected." And all of us have a responsibility now as Americans to say we don't want our country to be like other countries, where people fight with each other because of their differences over race or religion or ethnic group or tribal groups. There's too much of that in the world. America is going in the other direction. We're going to draw strength from our differences and our shared values, and one of those is the freedom of religion, and we respect that, and we're going to keep fighting for it all the way.

Let me also tell you that I am very grateful to the State of Tennessee for being so good to me and to our administration. I thank Governor McWherter and Congressman Tanner and Mr. Purcell, all the others that are here, Lois DeBerry, the other leaders of the legislature and local government, people that have been involved in our campaigns. But I cannot thank you enough for the gift of friendship and service that Al and Tipper Gore have been to the United States while I've been President. You have no idea, even in Tennessee, how much difference they've made for America and for the future.

There are many things I could say, but just one thing I'd like to emphasize: Every year the Gores have come back to Nashville to have a family conference, to try to stand up for the things that I've cared about a long time and that Hillary has worked for for more than 25 years. And out of those family conferences have come some very impressive things. We now have a family and medical leave law that 12 million American families have been able to take advantage of, to take a little time off from work without losing their job when there's a baby born or a sick parent, and that's a good thing. And we want to build on it.

We now have a law which says that we're going to put a V-chip in new televisions so that parents can help to control the programming their children see and now an agreement to 3 more hours of quality educational television for our children on the networks of America. And I thank them for that.

The other thing I'd like to say is back in the election in 1992, Al Gore used to give a little speech. I don't know if you remember

it, but he said, "The problem in this country is that everything that ought to be up is down, and everything that ought to be down is up." Do you remember when he said that? America was laughing with him and rocking with him. But I'll tell you something, he's got to change his speech this time, because everything that ought to be down is down, and the things that ought to be up are up.

And I just want to tell you that for all of you who have given us a chance to serve, you should feel that you were a part of putting in place a strategy that has cut the deficit by 60 percent, that has given us record exports, that has continued to invest in education, in technology, and the future, that has brought this deficit down, and that will balance the budget without destroying our commitments to our senior citizens, to our children, to families with disabilities through Medicare and Medicaid and without requiring cuts in education and protecting the environment. We are going to go into a future with a strong economy, where there are more good jobs and where we're growing together in the 21st century because of the policies that you have supported.

And I just want to ask you in the weeks and months ahead to go out and be a good citizen, talk to your friends and neighbors and ask them, what do you want America to look like when we reach the 21st century—it's just 4 years away—what do you want America to look like when your children are your age? It's not that far away. We've got to build an America where every single solitary person, every boy and girl, without regard to their race, their income, their station in life, has a chance to live out their dreams. We've got to build an America strong enough to protect ourselves and to lead the world for peace and freedom. And as we saw at those churches today—one white, one black, both burned and brought together—we have got to build an America where we're coming together, not being driven apart the way so many other countries are. That's the way to go into the future, and that's what we're going to do.

Thank you, God bless you, and thank you for a happy birthday. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:12 p.m. at McKellar-Sipes Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Bill Purcell, majority leader, and Lois DeBerry, speaker pro tempore, of the Tennessee House of Representatives.

Remarks on Signing the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996

August 20, 1996

Thank you very much. Cathy, it may be your birthday, but I would say that everybody here feels that you have given us a great gift today by reminding us about what this is all about. And we wish you and your fine children well. And I don't think being in the band will hurt them a bit. I'm glad you're going to do that. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank the members of our administration who are here: Secretary Reich, Small Business Administrator Phil Lader, and others. I want to thank all the Members of Congress who are here, especially Senator Kennedy who, himself, probably broke the wage and hour laws by working so hard to pass this bill. If we'd been paying him by the hour, we'd be underpaying him in the last year. Thank you very much.

There are a lot of people who worked hard on this bill who aren't here: Senator Daschle, Congressman Gephardt, Congressman Bonior, Congressman Clay, in particular did. I want to join with others and thank the countless labor unions who have championed this bill, led by the truly tireless John Sweeney.

I'd like to remind the American people of something, because sometimes our unions are criticized for looking out for their members too much. There are very few unions in America that have minimum wage workers. Most of these unions did this because they thought it was the right thing to do. They spent their time and their money and their energy trying to help other people who do not belong to their organizations, and I thank you for that.

I'd like to thank the religious groups, the economists, the business people who have made this their cause of concern. Again, I thank the Members, including members of both parties, who supported this legislation.

I'll say more in a moment about the rest of the bill, but let me just begin by saying this is a truly remarkable piece of legislation. It is pro-work, pro-business, and pro-family; it raises the minimum wage; it helps small businesses in a number of ways that I will explain in a moment, including retirement and incentive to invest; and it promotes adoption in two very sweeping ways that have long needed to be done in the United States. This is a cause for celebration for all Americans of all parties, all walks of life, all faiths. This bill represents the very best in our country.

It will give 10 million Americans, as Cathy said, a chance to raise stronger families and build better futures. By coming together across lines that have too often divided us and finding common ground, we have made this a real season of achievement for the people of America.

At its heart, this bill does reaffirm our most profoundly American values, offering opportunity to all, demanding responsibility from all, and coming together as a community to do the right thing. This bill says to the working people of America: If you're willing to take responsibility and go to work, your work will be honored. We're going to honor your commitment to your family. We're going to recognize that \$4.25 an hour is not enough to raise a family.

It's harder and harder to raise children today and harder and harder for people to succeed at home and at work. And I have said repeatedly, over and over again to the American people: We must not force our families to make a choice. Most parents have to work. We have a national interest in seeing that our people can succeed at home where it counts the most in raising their children, and succeed at work so they'll have enough income to be able to succeed at home. We must do both, and this bill helps us achieve that goal.

These 10 million Americans will become part of America's economic success story. A success story that in the last 4 years has led us to 900,000 new construction jobs; a record number of new businesses started, including those owned by women and minorities; a deficit that is the smallest it's been since 1981, and 60 percent less than it was when I took

office; 10 million new jobs; 12 million American families who have been able to take advantage of family and medical leave; almost 4½ million new homeowners and 10 million other Americans who refinanced their homes at lower mortgage rates. And, most importantly of all, perhaps, real hourly wages, which fell for a decade, have finally begun to rise again. America is on the move.

But our challenge, my fellow Americans, is to make sure that every American can reap the rewards of a growing economy, every American has the tools to make the most of his or her own life, to build those strong families and to succeed at home and at work. As the Vice President said, the first step was taken in 1993 with the passage of the family and medical leave law and with the earned-income tax credit, which cut taxes for 15 million working families. Today, that earned-income tax credit is worth about \$1,000 to a family of four with an income under \$28,000 a year.

Well, today we complete the second half of that effort. Together with our tax cut for working families, this bill ensures that a parent working full time at the minimum wage can lift himself or herself and their children out of poverty. Nobody who works full time with kids in the home should be in poverty. If we want to really revolutionize America's welfare system and move people from welfare to work and reward work, that is the first, ultimate test we all have to meet. If you get up every day and you go to work, and you put in your time and you have kids in your home, you and your children will not be in poverty.

We have some hard working minimum wage people here today supporting Cathy. Let me tell you about them: 70 percent of them are adults, 6 of 10 are working women, and for them, work is about more than a paycheck, it's about pride. They want a wage they can raise their families on. By raising the minimum wage by 90 cents, this bill, over 2 years, will give those families an additional \$1,800 a year in income, enough to buy 7 months of groceries, several months of rent, or child care, or as Cathy said, to pay all of the bills from the utilities in the same month.

For many, this bill will make the difference between their ability to keep their families

together and their failure to do so. These people reflect America's values, and it's a lot harder for them than it is for most of us to go around living what they say they believe in. It's about time they got a reward, and today they'll get it.

I would also like to say a very special word of thanks to the business owners, especially the small-business owners who supported this bill. Many of the minimum wage employers I talk to wanted to pay their employees more than 4.25 an hour and would be happy to do so as long as they can do it without hurting their businesses, and that means their competitors have to do the same thing. This bill will allow them to compete and win, to have happier, more productive employees, and to know they're doing the right thing. For all of those small businesses, I am very, very appreciative.

I would also like to say that this bill does a remarkable number of things for small businesses. In each of the last 3 years, our Nation has set a new record in each succeeding year in the number of new businesses started. And we know that most of the new jobs in America are being created by small- and medium-sized businesses. In 1993, I proposed a \$15,000 increase in the amount of capital a small business can expense, to spark the kind of investment that they need to create jobs. Well, in 1993 we only won half that increase, but today I'll get to sign the second half into law, and I thank the Congress for passing that, as well.

As the Vice President said, this bill also includes a work-opportunity tax credit to provide jobs for the most economically disadvantaged working Americans, including people who want to move from welfare to work. Now, there will be a tightly drawn economic incentive for people to hire those folks and give them a chance to enter the work force, as well. It extends the research tax credit to help businesses stay competitive in the global economy. It extends a tax incentive for businesses to train and educate their employees. That's good news for people who need those skills, and it's good news for America because we have to have the best educated work force in the world in the 21st century.

This legislation does even more to strengthen small business by strengthening

the families that make them up. It helps millions of more Americans to save for their own retirement. It makes it much easier for small businesses to offer pension plans by creating a new small business 401(k) plan. It also lets more Americans keep their pensions when they change jobs without having to wait a year before they can start saving at their new jobs. As many as 10 million Americans without pensions today could now earn them as a result of this bill.

I'm delighted we are joined today, among others, by Shawn Marcell, the CEO of Prima Facie, a fast-growing video monitoring company in Pennsylvania, which now has just 17 employees, but that's a lot more than he started with. He stood with me in April and promised that if we kept our word and made pensions easier and cheaper for small businesses like his, he'd give pensions to all of his employees. Today, he has told us he's making good on that pledge. I'd like him to stand up, and say I predict that thousands more will follow Shawn's lead. Thank you, Shawn. Please stand up. Let's give him a hand. God bless you, sir. *[Applause]* Thank you.

I'd also like to say a special word of thanks to our SBA Administrator, Phil Lader, and to the White House Conference on Small Business. When the White House Conference on Small Business met, they said one of their top priorities was increasing the availability and the security of pensions for small-business owners in America. This is a good thing. It is also pro-work, pro-family, and pro-business.

Finally, this bill does something else that is especially important to me and to Hillary, and I'm glad she's here with us today. It breaks down the financial and bureaucratic barriers to adoption, giving more children what every child needs and deserves, loving parents and a strong, stable home.

Two weeks ago, we had a celebration for the American athletes who made us so proud in Atlanta at the centennial Olympics. Millions of Americans now know that one of them, the Decathlon Gold Medalist Dan O'Brien, speaks movingly about having been an adopted child and how much the support of his family meant in his life. Right now, there are tens of thousands of children wait-

ing for the kind of family that helped to make Dan O'Brien an Olympic champion. At the same time, there are thousands of middle class families that want to bring children into their homes but cannot afford it. We're offering a \$5,000 tax credit to help bring them together. It gives even more help to families that will adopt children with disabilities or take in two siblings, rather than seeing them split up. And lastly, this bill ends the long standing bias against interracial adoption which has too often meant an endless, need-less wait for America's children.

You know, as much as we talk about strong, loving families, it's not every day that we here in Washington get to enact a law that literally creates them or helps them stay together. This is such a day. Although he can't be with us today, I also want to thank Dave Thomas, himself adopted, who went on to found Wendy's and do so much for our country. Perhaps more than any other American citizen, he has made these adoption provisions possible, and we thank him.

Lastly, I'd like to point out that we do have some significant number of adoptive families here with us today, including some who are on the stage. And so I'd just like to acknowledge the Weeks family, the Wolfington family, the Outlaw family, the Fitzwater family, and ask them and anyone else here from the adoptive family community to stand up who'd like to stand. We'd like to recognize you and thank you for being here. Thank you all for being here. Thank you.

Beside me, or in front of me now, is the desk used by Frances Perkins, Franklin Roosevelt's labor secretary and the very first woman ever to serve in the Cabinet. She was one of our greatest labor secretaries. It was from her desk that many of America's pioneering wage, hour, and workplace laws originated, including the very first 25 cent an hour minimum wage signed into law by President Roosevelt in 1938.

Secretary Perkins understood that a living wage was about more than feeding a family or shelter from a storm. A living wage makes it possible to participate in what she called the culture of community, to take part in the family, the community, the religious life we all cherish. Confident in our ability to provide for ourselves and for our children, secure in

the knowledge that hard work does pay. A minimum wage increase, portable health care, pension security, welfare to work opportunities, that's a plan that's putting America on the right track.

Now, we have to press forward, giving tax cuts for education and childrearing and child care, buying a first home, finishing that job of balancing the budget without violating our obligations to our parents and our children and the disabled and health care, to education and the environment and to our future. That's a plan that will keep America on the right track, building strong families and strong futures by working together.

For everyone here who played a role in this happy day, I thank you, America thanks you, and our country is better because of your endeavors.

God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Catherine Wilkinson, an employee of West Virginia Northern Community College, who introduced the President, and John Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO. H.R. 3448, approved August 20, was assigned Public Law No. 104-188.

Statement on Signing the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996 *August 20, 1996*

Today I have signed into law H.R. 3448, the "Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996."

This is important and long overdue legislation that provides a badly needed pay raise for millions of Americans and their families who struggle to make ends meet while working at the minimum wage. The Act boosts the minimum wage in two steps—a 50 cent increase from \$4.25 to \$4.75 an hour that takes effect October 1, followed by an additional 40 cent rise to \$5.15 an hour on September 1, 1997. This increase will help some 10 million of our hardest pressed working families build a better future. It is true to the basic American bargain that if you work hard you ought to have food on your table and a living wage in your pocket. It is the right thing to do.

I should note that I disagree with certain provisions added to the minimum wage title of the Act, such as the provision creating a new subminimum wage for young people and the one denying increased cash wages to most employees who rely on tips for part of their income. Still, those defects do not obscure the central accomplishment of this Act—securing the first minimum wage increase since 1991.

Beyond raising the minimum wage, this Act represents real progress on a number of other fronts.

First, I am particularly gratified by the important provisions in this Act concerning adoption. The Act provides a nonrefundable tax credit of up to \$5,000 per child for adoption expenses; \$6,000 for children with special needs. It will help thousands of children waiting for a family who wants them. It will help thousands of middle class parents realize their dream of adopting a child. It will build stronger families and stronger communities.

Moreover, the Act bars placement agencies that receive Federal funds from denying or delaying adoptions based on race, color, or national origin. As I have consistently said, it is time to end the historical bias against interracial adoptions. That bias has too often meant interminable delay for children waiting to be matched with parents of the same race. It is time to put the creation of strong and loving families first.

Second, the Act creates a simplified, 401(k) retirement plan for small businesses, making it far easier for such companies to offer pensions to their employees. This new plan includes many of the pension reforms my Administration proposed more than a year ago. For example, it increases the portability of pensions, allowing more new workers to start saving for retirement from their first day on the job. It cuts the vesting period for workers in multiemployer plans from 10 years to 5, immediately vesting over 1 million workers in their benefits. It repeals the so-called “family aggregation rule,” which limited the retirement benefits of family members working together in the same business. It allows nonprofit organizations and Indian tribes to maintain 401(k) plans for their workers; assures veterans they will have con-

tinued pension coverage if they return to a civilian job after military service; and makes pension benefits safer and more secure for millions of employees of State and local governments. The pension provisions in the Act are not perfect—they provide a smaller share of benefits to lower and middle wage workers than I proposed. But they are a significant step in the right direction.

Third, the Act gives a boost to small business by increasing the amount of capital that small businesses can write off as an expense. I proposed a \$15,000 increase in 1993 in order to encourage the kind of investment that creates new growth and jobs. The Congress passed half of what we advocated then and this legislation gives us the other half. Although the measure in this Act is phased in more slowly than I proposed, it will still give small businesses a good incentive for capital investment.

Fourth, the Act extends the research tax credit, an important measure for a high-tech economy that will retain its competitive edge in the 21st century only if we remain committed to innovation and the research that underlies it. I wanted the Congress to go further by reinstating the research credit retroactively to July 1, 1995, when it last expired, and making it permanent. But this extension, through May of next year, is an important step forward.

Fifth, the Act extends a tax incentive for businesses that train and educate their employees. That incentive excludes from an employee’s taxable income as much as \$5,250 of educational assistance provided by an employer. Such assistance is another key element in maintaining U.S. competitiveness because a better trained, better educated work force is vital to achieving higher productivity. I regret that the Congress failed to make this incentive permanent and that it has eliminated the incentive for post-graduate education. But in extending the incentive for undergraduate education through May 1997, the Act takes a useful step.

Sixth, by replacing the expiring Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC) with a new Work Opportunity Tax Credit, the Act provides a significant incentive for employers to hire people from certain targeted groups most in need of jobs, such as high-risk youth. I am

pleased to see improvements that address many of the concerns raised about implementation of the TJTC. For example, the minimum employment period required before an employer becomes eligible for the credit will promote longer, more meaningful work experiences for those hired.

As strong a piece of legislation as this is overall, however, I am concerned about three provisions, two of which I objected to when they were included in legislation I vetoed last year.

The first provision repeals the tax credit related to corporate investments in Puerto Rico and other insular areas. I urged the Congress to reform the credit and use the resulting revenue for Puerto Rico's social and job training needs. My proposal would have, over time, prevented companies from obtaining tax benefits by merely attributing income to the islands, but it would have continued to give companies a tax credit for wages and local taxes paid and capital investments made there, as well as for earnings reinvested in Puerto Rico and qualified Caribbean Basin Initiative countries. This legislation ignores the real needs of our citizens in Puerto Rico, ending the incentive for new investment now and phasing out the incentive for existing investments. I remain committed to my proposal for an effective incentive based on real economy activity that preserves and creates jobs in underdeveloped islands, and I hope that the Congress will act to ensure that the incentive for economic activity remains in effect.

A second provision repeals a 1993 initiative of this Administration that reduces tax incentives for U.S. companies to move jobs and operations abroad. Repeal of this provision will allow businesses to avoid taxes by accumulating foreign earnings without limit.

Finally, I have reservations about a provision in the Act which makes civil damages based on nonphysical injury or illness taxable. Such damages are paid to compensate for injury, whether physical or not, and are designed to make victims whole, not to enrich them. These damages should not be considered a source of taxable income.

Notwithstanding these objections, this is important, forward-looking legislation. It gives millions of hard-pressed workers a well-

deserved raise, will make adoption a reality for thousands of grateful families and children, takes a good first step toward providing adequate retirement benefits and security for employees of small businesses, and creates useful tax incentives for the benefit of small businesses and their employees. Where there are improvements yet to be made, we will continue to work with the Congress to make them.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
August 20, 1996.

NOTE: H.R. 3448, approved August 20, was assigned Public Law No. 104-188.

Remarks on Signing the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996

August 21, 1996

Thank you very much. Thank you so much. Thank you very much for that wonderful introduction, Merit, and thank you for the courage of your example.

I want to begin by recognizing the Members of Congress who are here who worked on this so hard. In addition to Senators Kassebaum and Kennedy, we have Senator John Breaux, Senator Bill Cohen, Senator Byron Dorgan, Senator Carl Levin, Congressman Mike Bilirakis, Congressman John Conyers, Congressman Harris Fawell and Congressman Dennis Hastert, Congressman David Hobson, and Congressman Bill Thomas. I thank all of them for their work on this.

I thank Secretary Shalala for her hard work; the SBA Administrator, Phil Lader, who is here. I'd also like to recognize a gentleman in the audience who did a lot of work with the First Lady on this and who is, I'm sure, happy to be here today, our former Surgeon General, Dr. Everett Koop. Thank you, sir, for being here. And Dr. Henry Foster, it's nice to see you; thank you for being here, sir.

There are so many others I'd like to thank. I want to thank all the consumer groups, the business groups, the labor groups, the grassroots people, the people who were personally affected by health care problems and prob-

lems in our system, who are here. All of you worked so hard to make this day a reality. I want to thank all the people who worked on the staff at the White House, the people especially who worked with the First Lady from 1993 on. All of you should take some great satisfaction in seeing this day come to pass, and I want you to know that I will never forget the work that all of you have done and the service you have rendered to the American people, and we thank you.

But a lot of people who worked on health reform were just folks, people that Hillary met traveling around the country, or people that I had the good fortune to run into who told me their stories and who helped to work to make this day a reality. People like Dan Lumley, who is here with us today, a man we met on our bus tour, from Portland, Oregon. And there have been many others who have helped, like Kristin Hopper and Tensia Alvarez, who are here with their families today. We thank you for coming here with your families. And let me again especially thank Merit Kimball and her wonderful parents, Jack and Rosemary, who have come here today. They have had the courage to tell their story and to fight for their cause and on behalf of tens of millions of other Americans. They have given us the hope that together we can make things better for more Americans.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act shows what happens, as Senator Kassebaum said and Senator Kennedy said, when we work together, when we cross party lines and put the interests of the American people first. This bill is a clear boost to our values as Americans. It offers opportunity by allowing people to take their health insurance from job to job. It rewards responsibility by helping people to work who desperately want to work. It brings us together in a common community to do what's right by all of our people, saying that we ought to make it possible for more and more people to succeed at work without losing the security of knowing that when they need health care it'll be there.

Health care reform is measured by how many lives it improves. With this bill we take a long step toward the kind of health care reform our Nation needs. It seals the cracks

that swallow as many as 25 million Americans who can't get insurance or who fear they'll lose it. Now they're going to be protected.

Never has such a measure been more needed for our people. Our new economy presents Americans with opportunities like never before to work their way into better paying jobs. And yet our health care system has worked to paralyze many workers who fear losing their health care coverage if they take those better jobs and change their employers. At the same time, millions of Americans find themselves labeled as people with preexisting conditions, from cancer to AIDS, which disqualifies them and their families for coverage, including the husband, the pregnant wife who lose their insurance; the young woman who can't change jobs because her new insurance doesn't cover diabetes; the small-business owner who faithfully pays group health insurance premiums for years and then finds that his coverage won't be renewed because one of his employees has developed a heart condition.

No more. This bill changes all that. Today we declare a victory for millions of Americans and their families. No longer will you live in fear of losing your health insurance because of the state of your health. No longer need you hesitate about taking a better job because you're afraid to lose your coverage. And no longer will small businesses be denied access to insurance for their employees. The health insurance reform bill I sign today will protect the health care of millions of working Americans and give them and their families something that cannot be measured, peace of mind.

The bill also addresses other problems in getting more affordable insurance to our workers. It makes it easier and less expensive for the self-employed to purchase their insurance. As Senator Kassebaum said, it phases in a tax deduction of 80 percent for the self-employed and helps to even the playing field with bigger businesses. Second, it prevents fraud and abuse. It toughens penalties and helps us to go after bad apple health care providers who bilk the system of billions of dollars from Medicare, from Medicaid, and from private insurance companies. I especially want to thank Secretary Shalala for her work on these fraud and abuse provisions.

Third, it makes the health care system more simple. It will modernize, streamline, and cut the cost of insurance paperwork by devising a uniform electronic system for paying health care claims. It will provide steps to protect the privacy of people in the system as it does so. Fourth, it allows the establishment of a limited number of medical savings accounts to allow us to study this approach and see how it works, to determine whether this new approach can make a positive contribution to health care coverage and to affordability. And fifth, it helps with long-term care. It provides consumer protections and makes long-term care insurance more affordable. This bill, in short, does a very great deal.

I want to echo what Senator Kennedy said: Senator Kassebaum, we are deeply in your debt. We're going to miss you, and you must be very proud that here in the last months of your career in the Senate you have done such a magnificent thing. We thank you so much, ma'am.

Senator Kennedy, as I told you before we came out here, when I woke up this morning and thought about signing this bill today, I remembered a day a very long time ago, almost 18 years ago now, when I moderated a panel on health care reform in Memphis, Tennessee, at one of our many conventions, in 1978. And you were there, telling the American people in 1978 that every person in America deserved the health care that your son had when he was first taken ill. I'm proud of you for these two decades of commitment, sir. Thank you.

And if you'll forgive me a personal note, I believe, Hillary, that this justifies all those days on the road and all those nights you stayed up reading the incomprehensibly complex issues of health care. Thank you.

I wish this bill had contained the provision to eliminate the differential treatment of mental health coverage or at least taken some positive steps in that direction. I know this is something that is especially important to Tipper Gore, and I know that we all know that we're going to have to deal with that.

And we have to do more, and this is also very important. We must find a way to provide coverage for workers and their families who are in transition. I have proposed a plan which we put in our balanced budget to cover

3 million workers and their families, including 700,000 children, who today have nowhere to turn for affordable health care because the worker is changing jobs. If a person is doing the right thing, trying to be responsible, dying to go to work, we should help those kind of people to get back on their feet without being thrown flat on their back without health insurance.

Our mission in pursuing health care reform from the start has been to provide more fairness and quality for the American people. That's why we worked to strengthen the Medicare Trust Fund, although we must do more, and our balanced budget plan does that. That's why we've worked to preserve and to protect Medicaid, why we focused on the problems of health care costs, which, thanks to efforts in the private sector, to our own efforts, and to the general direction of our economy with growth with low inflation, inflation in health care slowed to 3.9 percent in 1995, the lowest in 23 years. And for the first half of this year, it is down to less than 2 percent and may go lower still. We must not let this be a temporary development.

That's also why we've worked to raise childhood immunization rates dramatically, to increase investment in biomedical research, including funding for breast cancer and AIDS; why we've expedited the FDA review process in approval for new drugs, so that people who need a miracle might be able to find it; why we fought to protect our children from the harmful effects of tobacco advertising aimed at them.

But now we need to build on what we have achieved. I was encouraged to see Senator Kassebaum with her coach's mentality saying that the game is not over, and we still have another month this year. And Senator, I'm suited up and ready to play. And I appreciate you saying that.

This is a particularly happy day for me because, like yesterday when we signed the minimum wage bill and the bill which gave such strong incentives to small businesses to invest in their own businesses and made it so much easier for people to adopt children who were willing to take on that profoundly important responsibility—these 2 days together, and this day especially, helps ordinary Americans to benefit from the growth and

progress in the American economy. America is on the right track, not only when the overall numbers look good but when every responsible American family can participate in that.

It's good that we have 10 million new jobs, record numbers of new businesses, that we have the lowest deficit and the highest rates of homeownership in 15 years. That's very good. But it's even better when every single American who is willing to be responsible for his or her family and his or her work can participate in those trends. And with portable health care, the minimum wage increase, additional incentives for small business growth, more pension security, moving people from welfare to work, that will help all Americans to be a part of our 21st century America.

We have more to do in educational opportunity, in helping people with their child care and childrearing obligations, in helping people to buy their first home, in finishing the job of balancing the budget so that we can keep interest rates down and inflation down. But we are clearly moving on the right track.

I look forward to working with Congress when they come back in September and to continuing this effort. I want to say again, this bill passed almost unanimously. This is a bill that both Senators Kennedy and Kassebaum can be proud of because they brought all their colleagues along with them. This is a bill that people who have been working in the House for years and years and years on health care reform can be proud of, and so can everybody else who showed up and voted for it. And Congressman Hastert, I want to echo what Senator Kassebaum said, we appreciate your work and we know how much you did to get those last few difficult issues resolved in a way that we could all live with.

We can do things when we work together and put the American people first. And whenever we work on behalf of our families and our children, as we do with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, America always wins.

So now, in the names of the families and children who will have better lives because of it, I am honored to sign this profoundly important piece of legislation. And I'd like to ask the Members of Congress to come up

and join me, along with the families who are here.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:50 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Merit Kimball, director of communications, Alliance for Health Reform; and Henry W. Foster, Jr., Senior Adviser to the President on Teen Pregnancy and Youth Issues. H.R. 3103, approved August 21, was assigned Public Law No. 104-191.

Statement on Signing the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996

August 21, 1996

I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 3103, the "Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996." For the first time, this Act will ensure the portability of health benefits when workers change or lose their jobs and will protect workers against discrimination by health plans based on their health status.

For too long, tens of millions of Americans have been denied health insurance coverage because they have preexisting conditions. We have all heard their stories.

- A husband and his pregnant wife lose their insurance and then find they cannot buy new coverage because her pregnancy is considered a preexisting condition.
- A young woman starting out in her career cannot accept a promotion with another company because its health insurance policy won't cover her diabetes.
- A small business owner faithfully pays his group health insurance premiums for years only to learn that his coverage won't be renewed after one of his employees develops a heart condition.

Since taking office, I have been fighting for changes that would stop this kind of unfairness and make health insurance more accessible for all people, including the most needy. I am pleased that the Congress has responded to my call. In passing this Act, a modest but important step has been taken

to improve Americans' access to health care coverage.

This legislation will set into motion several key reforms. First, it will eliminate the possibility that individuals can be denied coverage because they have a preexisting medical condition. Second, it will require insurance companies to sell coverage to small employer groups and to individuals who lose group coverage without regard to their health risk status. Finally, it will require insurers to renew the policies they sell to groups and individuals.

In addition to the health insurance reforms, this legislation will help strengthen other aspects of our health care system.

- It increases the tax deductibility of health insurance premiums for the self-employed and their dependents from 30 percent to 80 percent by calendar year 2006.
- It significantly expands Federal authority and resources to combat fraud and abuse in Federal health programs, such as Medicare, and in the private sector.
- It provides for the development of: (1) national standards for the electronic submission of health insurance claims that will reduce paperwork, administrative costs, and burdens for doctors and hospitals; and (2) privacy protection recommendations for health information generally, and, in the absence of additional legislation, regulations for privacy of health care claims information.
- It establishes consumer protection standards for certain long-term care insurance policies and provides tax clarifications to make those policies more affordable and available.

Like most legislation, this Act includes compromises that are less than perfect. For example, it includes a provision that will allow a limited number of individuals covered by catastrophic health insurance to establish tax-advantaged medical savings accounts, or MSAs. I opposed an open-ended, unconstrained expansion of MSAs because of my concern that MSAs may create incentives for healthier people to select catastrophic health coverage, which experts believe would

increase premiums for those who choose traditional, comprehensive health care policies. I agreed, however, to work with the Congress in crafting a compromise that would permit the establishment of a limited number of MSAs. This limited use of MSAs will be studied carefully for a period of 4 years before deciding whether or not to expand them to the broader health insurance market, and the Congress will have to consider this issue and vote again before doing so.

Similarly, while the bill makes some of the positive changes that I have proposed to strengthen our efforts to combat health care fraud and abuse, I am concerned that it also contains a provision that could weaken those efforts. I oppose the requirement that Government officials provide advisory opinions on whether certain arrangements violate criminal health fraud statutes. The Attorney General and the Secretary of Health and Human Services are concerned that advisory opinions of this nature could create complexities that would burden the efforts to enforce laws against health care fraud and abuse. Therefore, I am directing the Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services to work closely together in implementing this provision to ensure that it promotes and protects Federal law enforcement activities relating to health care fraud.

Finally, I want to reiterate my disappointment that the Congress dropped from this legislation the mental health parity provision that received such bipartisan support in the Senate. Individuals with mental illness have long suffered from discrimination in health plans that impose severe financial burdens on top of the illnesses they already face. I urge the Congress to act at the earliest opportunity to require parity in health insurance coverage for mental health services. I look forward to working with the Congress to address this critical issue.

As I sign this legislation, I am particularly grateful to Senators Kassebaum and Kennedy and the many other Members of Congress who worked tirelessly to assure that this bill is a meaningful and important step toward making health care more accessible and more secure for millions of Americans. I pledge to continue this effort and hope that

the Congress will work with me and so that all Americans can have health care security.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
August 21, 1996.

NOTE: H.R. 3103, approved August 21, was assigned Public Law No. 104-191.

Statement on Signing the War Crimes Act of 1996

August 21, 1996

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 3680, the "War Crimes Act of 1996." This bill, in furtherance of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, extends U.S. criminal jurisdiction over certain war crimes and provides the United States with clearer authority to prosecute violations of the laws of war.

Most grave breaches of the Conventions are already subject to U.S. prosecution if committed in the United States and many—such as hostage taking, terrorism or genocide—could be prosecuted even if committed abroad. However, many other crimes which would be considered grave breaches of the Conventions could not be prosecuted in United States courts. This legislation is designed to help fill that gap. It authorizes the prosecution of war criminals if they are found in or extradited to the United States. It applies to U.S. nationals or members of the Armed Forces who are perpetrators or victims of war crimes. It would apply, for example, in the case of American civilians subjected to war crimes in an overseas conflict.

This legislation represents an important reaffirmation of American leadership in the development of the law for the protection of victims of war.

In keeping with this leadership role, however, we can and should do even more to strengthen the law in this area. To that end, my Administration is committed to working with the Congress to expand the scope of this legislation. This expansion should address: (1) war crimes committed by *any* person who comes within the jurisdiction of the United States courts, including crimes committed by non-U.S. persons against non-U.S. victims; (2) cases involving other serious war

crimes not covered by H.R. 3680, such as those prohibited by The Hague Conventions of 1907; and (3) cases involving acts to be made criminal under the recently improved landmines protocol of the Convention on Conventional Weapons. This broadening of the law would not require the United States to exercise jurisdiction in any particular case, but would provide the authority to do so in the national interest.

This bill and the expansions we seek have been endorsed by the American Red Cross, which has had an important role to play in this area ever since its founder Clara Barton took the lead in securing U.S. ratification of the first Geneva Convention. The International Committee of the Red Cross has also voiced its support for our efforts to broaden the scope of this legislation.

In sum, this bill serves important goals and is a significant step forward. Now we should build on this progress and seek further improvements in promoting respect for the laws of war and in reinforcing protections for the victims of war.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
August 21, 1996.

NOTE: H.R. 3680, approved August 21, was assigned Public Law No. 104-192.

Proclamation 6912—Women's Equality Day, 1996

August 21, 1996

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Since America's earliest days, our citizens have engaged in a passionate struggle to create a Nation where all can enjoy the benefits of democracy in equal measure. In 1920, we took a great step toward that noble goal by declaring that the right to vote could not be denied on the basis of gender. This 76th anniversary of the adoption of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution gives us an opportunity to celebrate the advances made in empowering women to fully participate in the

political, cultural, social, and economic life of our country.

At long last we are seeing the fruits of our efforts to establish a society made strong by its vast diversity—a place where women not only make gains in traditionally male fields, but also use their talents and perspectives to enlarge the scope of public life. The extraordinary success of our female athletes at the Centennial Olympic Games in Atlanta is one stirring example of this progress. Historically excluded from so many arenas, today's women are carrying a shining torch of hope for younger generations to follow.

Now the challenge is to keep the doors of opportunity open and to build on the changes begun by the ratification of the 19th Amendment. We must continue to encourage women to pursue elected office and to contribute to the civil discourse. Every American stands to gain when women and men of all backgrounds participate in the political process and exercise their right to vote. This is a right that we must never take for granted—and a responsibility we must never shirk—because it gives each of us a voice in our national debate and calls every citizen to join in the pursuit of our Nation's fundamental ideals.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim August 26, 1996, as Women's Equality Day. I call upon all Americans to reflect on both the struggles and accomplishments of all women and to promote the observance of this day with appropriate programs and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of August, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:49 a.m., August 22, 1996]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on August 23.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting a Report on the Korean
Peninsula Energy Development
Organization**

August 21, 1996

Dear Mr. _____:

I transmit herewith the 6-month report required under the heading "International Organizations and Programs" in Title IV of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act, 1996 (Public Law 104-107), relating to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO).

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Mark O. Hatfield, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; and Robert L. Livingston, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting a Report on the
Partnership For Peace Initiative**

August 21, 1996

Dear Mr. _____:

In accordance with section 514(a) of Public Law 103-236 (22 U.S.C. 1928(a)), I am submitting to you this report on implementation of the Partnership for Peace (PFP) initiative.

The ongoing adaptation of Europe's security structures to post-Cold War realities remains one of our highest foreign policy priorities. A central element of this adaptation is the extension of NATO's zone of stability and security to Europe's emerging democracies. Over the past two and a half years, the Partnership for Peace has made a significant contribution to this goal by forging new cooperative ties between the Alliance and its Partners. This U.S. initiative has united NATO Allies with countries recently emerged from communist and traditionally neutral states in a partnership based on respect for democratic principles, peaceful resolution of disputes, and practical cooperation.

For all Partners, PFP will be an enduring instrument for forging stronger ties with

NATO. For those Partners interested in joining NATO, PFP is the best path to membership. As you will see from the enclosed report, NATO and its Partners have made impressive progress in broadening and deepening the Partnership over the past year. We are working with our Allies and Partners to build on the Partnership's early momentum in the shared conviction that cooperation and common action are the best means to achieving lasting security throughout the Euro-Atlantic area.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, and Claiborne Pell, ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; and Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Lee H. Hamilton, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations.

Remarks on Signing the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 and an Exchange With Reporters

August 22, 1996

The President. Thank you very much. Lillie, thank you. Thank you, Mr. Vice President; to the members of the Cabinet; all of the Members of Congress who are here, thank you very much.

I'd like to say to Congressman Castle, I'm especially glad to see you here because 8 years ago about this time, when you were the Governor of Delaware and Governor Carper was the Congressman from Delaware, you and I were together at a signing like this.

Thank you, Senator Long, for coming here. Thank you, Governors Romer, Carper, Miller, and Caperton.

I'd also like to thank Penelope Howard and Janet Ferrel for coming here. They, too, have worked their way from welfare to independence, and we're honored to have them here. I'd like to thank all of the people who worked on this bill who have been introduced from our staff and Cabinet, but I'd also like to especially thank Bruce Reed, who

had a lot to do with working on the final compromises of this bill; I thank him.

Lillie Harden was up there talking, and I want to tell you how she happens to be here today. Ten years ago, Governor Castle and I were asked to cochair a Governors Task Force on Welfare Reform, and we were asked to work together on it. And when we met at Hilton Head in South Carolina, we had a little panel, and 41 Governors showed up to listen to people who were on welfare from several States. So I asked Carol Rasco to find me somebody from our State who had been in one of our welfare reform programs and had gone to work. She found Lillie Harden, and Lillie showed up at the program.

And I was conducting this meeting, and I committed a mistake that they always tell lawyers never to do: Never ask a question you do not know the answer to. *[Laughter]* But she was doing so well talking about it, as you saw how well-spoken she was today, and I said, "Lillie, what's the best thing about being off welfare?" And she looked me straight in the eye and said, "When my boy goes to school, and they say what does your mama do for a living, he can give an answer." I have never forgotten that. And when I saw the success of all of her children and the success that she's had in the past 10 years—I can tell you, you've had a bigger impact on me than I've had on you. And I thank you for the power of your example, for your family's. And for all of America, thank you very much.

What we are trying to do today is to overcome the flaws of the welfare system for the people who are trapped on it. We all know that the typical family on welfare today is very different from the one that welfare was designed to deal with 60 years ago. We all know that there are a lot of good people on welfare who just get off of it in the ordinary course of business but that a significant number of people are trapped on welfare for a very long time, exiling them from the entire community of work that gives structure to our lives.

Nearly 30 years ago, Robert Kennedy said, "Work is the meaning of what this country is all about. We need it as individuals, we need to sense it in our fellow citizens, and

we need it as a society and as a people.” He was right then, and it’s right now. From now on, our Nation’s answer to this great social challenge will no longer be a never-ending cycle of welfare, it will be the dignity, the power, and the ethic of work. Today we are taking an historic chance to make welfare what it was meant to be: a second chance, not a way of life.

The bill I’m about to sign, as I have said many times, is far from perfect, but it has come a very long way. Congress sent me two previous bills that I strongly believe failed to protect our children and did too little to move people from welfare to work. I vetoed both of them. This bill had broad bipartisan support and is much, much better on both counts.

The new bill restores America’s basic bargain of providing opportunity and demanding, in return, responsibility. It provides \$14 billion for child care, \$4 billion more than the present law does. It is good because without the assurance of child care it’s all but impossible for a mother with young children to go to work. It requires States to maintain their own spending on welfare reform and gives them powerful performance incentives to place more people on welfare in jobs. It gives States the capacity to create jobs by taking money now used for welfare checks and giving it to employers as subsidies as incentives to hire people. This bill will help people to go to work so they can stop drawing a welfare check and start drawing a paycheck.

It’s also better for children. It preserves the national safety net of food stamps and school lunches. It drops the deep cuts and the devastating changes in child protection, adoption, and help for disabled children. It preserves the national guarantee of health care for poor children, the disabled, the elderly, and people on welfare—the most important preservation of all.

It includes the tough child support enforcement measures that, as far as I know, every Member of Congress and everybody in the administration and every thinking person in the country has supported for more than 2 years now. It’s the most sweeping crackdown on deadbeat parents in history. We have succeeded in increasing child support collection 40 percent, but over a third

of the cases where there’s delinquencies involve people who cross State lines. For a lot of women and children, the only reason they’re on welfare today—the only reason—is that the father up and walked away when he could have made a contribution to the welfare of the children. That is wrong. If every parent paid the child support that he or she owes legally today, we could move 800,000 women and children off welfare immediately.

With this bill we say, if you don’t pay the child support you owe we’ll garnish your wages, take away your driver’s license, track you across State lines, if necessary, make you work off what you pay—what you owe. It is a good thing, and it will help dramatically to reduce welfare, increase independence, and reinforce parental responsibility.

As the Vice President said, we strongly disagree with a couple of provisions of this bill. We believe that the nutritional cuts are too deep, especially as they affect low-income working people and children. We should not be punishing people who are working for a living already; we should do everything we can to lift them up and keep them at work and help them to support their children. We also believe that the congressional leadership insisted on cuts in programs for legal immigrants that are far too deep.

These cuts, however, have nothing to do with the fundamental purpose of welfare reform. I signed this bill because this is an historic chance, where Republicans and Democrats got together and said, we’re going to take this historic chance to try to recreate the Nation’s social bargain with the poor. We’re going to try to change the parameters of the debate. We’re going to make it all new again and see if we can’t create a system of incentives which reinforce work and family and independence. We can change what is wrong. We should not have passed this historic opportunity to do what is right.

And so I want to ask all of you, without regard to party, to think through the implications of these other non-welfare issues on the American people, and let’s work together in good spirits and good faith to remedy what is wrong. We can balance the budget without these cuts. But let’s not obscure the fundamental purpose of the welfare provisions

of this legislation, which are good and solid and which can give us at least the chance to end the terrible, almost physical isolation of huge numbers of poor people and their children from the rest of mainstream America. We have to do that.

Let me also say that there's something really good about this legislation: When I sign it, we all have to start again, and this becomes everybody's responsibility. After I sign my name to this bill, welfare will no longer be a political issue. The two parties cannot attack each other over it. Politicians cannot attack poor people over it. There are no entrenched habits, systems, and failures that can be laid at the foot of someone else. We have to begin again. This is not the end of welfare reform; this is the beginning. And we have to all assume responsibility. Now that we are saying with this bill we expect work, we have to make sure the people have a chance to go to work. If we really value work, everybody in this society—businesses, nonprofits, religious institutions, individuals, those in government—all have a responsibility to make sure the jobs are there.

These three women have great stories. Almost everybody on welfare would like to have a story like that. And the rest of us now have a responsibility to give them that story. We cannot blame the system for the jobs they don't have anymore. If it doesn't work now, it's everybody's fault, mine, yours, and everybody else. There is no longer a system in the way.

I've worked hard over the past 4 years to create jobs and to steer investment into places where there are large numbers of people on welfare because there's been no economic recovery. That's what the empowerment zone program was all about. That's what the community development bank initiative was all about. That's what our urban Brownfield cleanup initiative was all about—trying to give people the means to make a living in areas that had been left behind.

I think we have to do more here in Washington to do that, and I'll have more to say about that later. But let me say again, we have to build a new work and family system. And this is everybody's responsibility now. The people on welfare are people just like

these three people we honor here today and their families. They are human beings. And we owe it to all of them to give them a chance to come back.

I talked the other day when the Vice President and I went down to Tennessee, and we were working with Congressman Tanner's district; we were working on a church that had burned. And there was a pastor there from a church in North Carolina that brought a group of his people in to work. And he started asking me about welfare reform, and I started telling him about it. And I said, "You know what you ought to do? You ought to go tell Governor Hunt that you would hire somebody on welfare to work in your church if he would give you the welfare check as a wage supplement, you'd double their pay, and you'd keep them employed for a year or so and see if you couldn't train them and help their families and see if their kids were all right." I said, "Would you do that?" He said, "In a heartbeat."

I think there are people all over America like that. I think there are people all over America like that. That's what I want all of you to be thinking about today: What are we going to do now? This is not over; this is just beginning. The Congress deserves our thanks for creating a new reality, but we have to fill in the blanks. The Governors asked for this responsibility; now they've got to live up to it. There are mayors that have responsibilities, county officials that have responsibilities. Every employer in this country that ever made a disparaging remark about the welfare system needs to think about whether he or she should now hire somebody from welfare and go to work, go to the State and say, "Okay, you give me the check. I'll use it as an income supplement. I'll train these people. I'll help them to start their lives, and we'll go forward from here."

Every single person needs to be thinking—every person in America tonight who sees a report of this who has ever said a disparaging word about the welfare system should now say, "Okay, that's gone. What is my responsibility to make it better?"

Two days ago we signed a bill increasing the minimum wage here and making it easier for people in small businesses to get and keep pensions. Yesterday we signed the Kasse-

baum-Kennedy bill which makes health care available to up to 25 million Americans, many of them in lower income jobs where they're more vulnerable. The bill I'm signing today preserves the increases in the earned-income tax credit for working families. It is now clearly better to go to work than to stay on welfare—clearly better. Because of actions taken by the Congress in this session, it is clearly better. And what we have to do now is to make that work a reality.

I've said this many times, but, you know, most American families find that the greatest challenge of their lives is how to do a good job raising their kids and do a good job at work. Trying to balance work and family is the challenge that most Americans in the workplace face. Thankfully, that's the challenge Lillie Harden's had to face for the last 10 years. That's just what we want for everybody. We want at least the chance to strike the right balance for everybody.

Today we are ending welfare as we know it. But I hope this day will be remembered not for what it ended but for what it began: a new day that offers hope, honors responsibility, rewards work, and changes the terms of the debate so that no one in America ever feels again the need to criticize people who are poor on welfare but instead feels the responsibility to reach out to men and women and children who are isolated, who need opportunity, and who are willing to assume responsibility, and give them the opportunity and the terms of responsibility.

Now, I'd like to ask Penelope Howard, Janet Ferrel, Lillie Harden, the Governors, and the Members of Congress from both parties who are here to come up and join me as I sign the welfare reform bill.

Tobacco Regulation

Q. Mr. President, before you sign the bill, could you tell us whether you think it's right to regulate tobacco or nicotine as a drug?

The President. You know, Wolf [Wolf Blitzer, CNN], under the law, I have to wait until the OMB makes a recommendation to me. I think we have to anticipate things. I can't say more than that right now.

[At this point, the President signed the bill.]

Reaction to Welfare Reform

Q. Mr. President, some of your core constituencies are furious with you for signing this bill. What do you say to them?

The President. Just what I said up there. We saved medical care. We saved food stamps. We saved child care. We saved the aid to disabled children. We saved the school lunch program. We saved the framework of support. What we did was to tell the State, now you have to create a system to give everyone a chance to go to work who is able-bodied, give everyone a chance to be independent. And we did—that is the right thing to do.

And now welfare is no longer a political football to be kicked around. It's a personal responsibility of every American who ever criticized the welfare system to help the poor people now to move from welfare to work. That's what I say.

This is going to be a good thing for the country. We're going to monitor it, and we're going to fix whatever is wrong with it.

Q. What guarantees are there that these things will be fixed, Mr. President, especially if Republicans remain in control of Congress?

The President. That's what we have elections for.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Governors Tom Carper of Delaware, Roy Romer of Colorado, Zell Miller of Georgia, and Gaston Caperton of West Virginia; and former Senator Russell B. Long. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on Signing the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996

August 22, 1996

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 3734, the "Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996." While far from perfect, this legislation provides an historic opportunity to end welfare as we know it and transform our broken welfare

system by promoting the fundamental values of work, responsibility, and family.

This Act honors my basic principles of real welfare reform. It requires work of welfare recipients, limits the time they can stay on welfare, and provides child care and health care to help them make the move from welfare to work. It demands personal responsibility, and puts in place tough child support enforcement measures. It promotes family and protects children.

This bipartisan legislation is significantly better than the bills that I vetoed. The Congress has removed many of the worst provisions of the vetoed bills and has included many of the improvements that I sought. I am especially pleased that the Congress has preserved the guarantee of health care for the poor, the elderly, and the disabled.

Most important, this Act is tough on work. Not only does it include firm but fair work requirements, it provides \$4 billion more in child care than the vetoed bills—so that parents can end their dependency on welfare and go to work—and maintains health and safety standards for day care providers. The bill also gives States positive incentives to move people into jobs and holds them accountable for maintaining spending on welfare reform. In addition, it gives States the ability to create subsidized jobs and to provide employers with incentives to hire people off welfare.

The Act also does much more to protect children than the vetoed bills. It cuts spending on childhood disability programs less deeply and does not unwisely change the child protection programs. It maintains the national nutritional safety net, by eliminating the Food Stamp annual spending cap and the Food Stamp and School Lunch block grants that the vetoed bills contained. In addition, it preserves the Federal guarantee of health care for individuals who are currently eligible for Medicaid through the AFDC program or are in transition from welfare to work.

Furthermore, this Act includes the tough personal responsibility and child support enforcement measures that I proposed 2 years ago. It requires minor mothers to live at home and stay in school as a condition of assistance. It cracks down on parents who fail to pay child support by garnishing their

wages, suspending their driver's licenses, tracking them across State lines, and, if necessary, making them work off what they owe.

For these reasons, I am proud to have signed this legislation. The current welfare system is fundamentally broken, and this may be our last best chance to set it straight. I am doing so, however, with strong objections to certain provisions, which I am determined to correct.

First, while the Act preserves the national nutritional safety net, its cuts to the Food Stamp program are too deep. Among other things, the Act reinstates a maximum on the amount that can be deducted for shelter costs when determining a household's eligibility for Food Stamps. This provision will disproportionately affect low-income families with children and high housing costs.

Second, I am deeply disappointed that this legislation would deny Federal assistance to legal immigrants and their children, and give States the option of doing the same. My Administration supports holding sponsors who bring immigrants into this country more responsible for their well-being. Legal immigrants and their children, however, should not be penalized if they become disabled and require medical assistance through no fault of their own. Neither should they be deprived of food stamp assistance without proper procedures or due regard for individual circumstances. Therefore, I will direct the Immigration and Naturalization Service to accelerate its unprecedented progress in removing all bureaucratic obstacles that stand in the way of citizenship for legal immigrants who are eligible. In addition, I will take any possible executive actions to avoid inaccurate or inequitable decisions to cut off food stamp benefits—for example, to a legal immigrant who has performed military service for this country or to one who has applied for and satisfied all the requirements of citizenship, but is awaiting governmental approval of his or her application.

In addition to placing an undue hardship on affected individuals, denial of Federal assistance to legal immigrants will shift costs to States, localities, hospitals, and medical clinics that serve large immigrant populations. Furthermore, States electing to deny these individuals assistance could be faced

with serious constitutional challenges and protracted legal battles.

I have concerns about other provisions of this legislation as well. It fails to provide sufficient contingency funding for States that experience a serious economic downturn, and it fails to provide Food Stamp support to childless adults who want to work, but cannot find a job or are not given the opportunity to participate in a work program. In addition, we must work to ensure that States provide in-kind vouchers to children whose parents reach the 5-year Federal time limit without finding work.

This Act gives States the responsibility that they have sought to reform the welfare system. This is a profound responsibility, and States must face it squarely. We will hold them accountable, insisting that they fulfill their duty to move people from welfare to work and to do right by our most vulnerable citizens, including children and battered women. I challenge each State to take advantage of its new flexibility to use money formerly available for welfare checks to encourage the private sector to provide jobs.

The best antipoverty program is still a job. Combined with the newly increased minimum wage and the Earned Income Tax Credit—which this legislation maintains—H.R. 3734 will make work pay for more Americans.

I am determined to work with the Congress in a bipartisan effort to correct the provisions of this legislation that go too far and have nothing to do with welfare reform. But, on balance, this bill is a real step forward for our country, for our values, and for people on welfare. It should represent not simply the ending of a system that too often hurts those it is supposed to help, but the beginning of a new era in which welfare will become what it was meant to be: a second chance, not a way of life. It is now up to all of us—States and cities, the Federal Government, businesses and ordinary citizens—to work together to make the promise of this new day real.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
August 22, 1996.

NOTE: H.R. 3734, approved August 22, was assigned Public Law No. 104-193.

Executive Order 13015—White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security

August 22, 1996

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Establishment. There is established the White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security (the “Commission”). The Commission shall consist of not more than 25 members, to be appointed by the President from the public and private sectors, each of whom shall have experience or expertise in some aspect of aviation safety or security. The Vice President shall serve as the Chair of the Commission.

Sec. 2. Functions. (a) The Commission shall advise the President on matters involving aviation safety and security, including air traffic control.

(b) The Commission shall develop and recommend to the President a strategy designed to improve aviation safety and security, both domestically and internationally.

(c) The Chair may, from time to time, invite experts to submit information to the Commission; hold hearings on relevant issues; and form committees and teams to assist the Commission in accomplishing its objectives and duties, which may include individuals other than members of the Commission.

Sec. 3. Administration. (a) The heads of executive departments and agencies shall, to the extent permitted by law, provide the Commission such information with respect to aviation safety and security as the Commission requires to fulfill its functions.

(b) The Commission shall be supported, both administratively and financially, by the Department of Transportation and such other sources (including other Federal agencies) as may lawfully contribute to Commission activities.

Sec. 4. General. (a) I have determined that the Commission shall be established in com-

pliance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. App. 2). Notwithstanding any other Executive order, the functions of the President under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, shall be performed by the Secretary of Transportation in accordance with the guidelines and procedures established by the Administrator of General Services, except that of reporting to the Congress.

(b) The Commission shall exist for a period of 6 months from the date of this order, unless extended by the President.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
August 22, 1996.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., August 26, 1996]

NOTE: This Executive order will be published in the *Federal Register* on August 27.

Remarks Announcing the Final Rule To Protect Youth From Tobacco

August 23, 1996

Thank you very much. Thank you, Linda, for your courage and your commitment to carry on Victor's legacy and your own crusade. Thank you, Mr. Vice President, Secretary Shalala, General McCaffrey. I'd like to say a special word of thanks to Commissioner Kessler and to Phil Lee, the Assistant Secretary of HHS. In different ways they have a great triumph today. Thank you, Dick Durbin, for being the first Member of Congress ever to talk to me about this issue. Thank you, Marty Meehan. Thank you to my former colleagues, the attorneys general. Mr. Kelley, I know you're retiring this year as the senior attorney general of America. And we served together back in the dark ages, and I can't imagine a more fitting capstone to your career than the fact that you've been a part of this and we thank you. Thank you, Mark Green.

I thank all the medical professionals who are here. I thank all the young people who are here, including Anna Santiago and Neal Stewart McSpadden, who came out here with us. I want to say a special word of thanks

to three Members of Congress who are not here but who deserve to be because of their work on this issue, Senator Lautenberg of New Jersey, Senator Wellstone of Minnesota, and Congressman Henry Waxman of California. Thank you, Joe Califano, for beating on me about these issues all these years we've been friends and long before I ever became President. Thank you, sir. *[Laughter]*

Thank you, Dr. Koop, for everything you have done to try to bring some sanity into the health policy of this country. This has been a great week for you; we had the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill a couple of days ago and this today. Maybe you can design an encore for us over the next month or two. *[Laughter]* But you have been a great force for good in this country, and we're grateful to you.

If I might, I'd like to say just a couple of personal words to some people who really deserve an enormous amount of credit for this decision. The Vice President was altogether too modest and too restrained, but the first time we began to discuss this was about the time the FDA opened their inquiry. And he looked at me and I looked at him and I said, "Well, you know what this might lead to?" And he said, "I certainly hope so." *[Laughter]* And I said, "Well, you know"—I shouldn't say this, this is our private conversation—I said, "You know, it really isn't an accident that nobody else has ever tried to do this. It's not an accident. This is not going to be one of those freebies, you know." *[Laughter]* And he began to talk about his sister who died of lung cancer and how much he loved his sister. We've had so many conversations about his sister that—not just about this, but about her life, the fact that she was one of the very first Peace Corps volunteers—that I feel almost that I know her personally. And I could see in his eyes this determination to redeem the promise of her wonderful life.

And I would also like to thank Nancy Gore Hunger's husband, Frank Hunger, who now serves as our Assistant Attorney General for the civil division. Thank you for being here, Frank. I know this is a great day for you.

I'd like to thank my wife, who has been talking to me about this issue for 20 years, and my wonderful daughter, who convinced

my mother to quit smoking on her 8th birthday, something I was never able to do.

So each of us has a personal journey here that has brought us to this point. But today we are here as a nation, to try to help our parents do a better job in raising their children to be strong and healthy and good citizens and to do our duty in that regard. We've tried to do a lot of things to help our kids over the last 4 years and to help parents raise their children. We've worked hard on cultural issues, supporting things like the V-chip and educational television. We had a big increase in support for antidrug programs in our schools and for drug treatment, and we vetoed efforts to reduce those, although we should be investing more. We have a zero tolerance policy to keep guns out of school. We're requiring our States to enforce antidrinking and driving laws. We defended drug testing cases involving student athletes. We've worked to bring order and discipline into our children's lives by encouraging and giving support to communities that try things like community-based curfews and school uniforms and tougher enforcement of truancy laws.

We know, however, that in spite of all the things that are going right in this country—with the economy up and more jobs, with the crime rate down, with fewer people on welfare and food stamps, dramatically higher percentage of our young children immunized—that we have continued to see substantial rises in tobacco and drug use among our young people. We know that while the scientific evidence is clearly unclear, children who do smoke cigarettes are much more likely to engage in other risky behavior, including the use of marijuana and cocaine.

So we have to keep pressing forward to deal with these challenges, every one of them. And I want to thank General McCaffrey for being willing to give up his four stars and magnificent campaign to take on the drug fight for America's children and America's future. I thank you, sir.

Today, we are taking direct action to protect our children from tobacco and especially the advertising that hooks children on a product. I hear from time to time politicians say that they don't really think advertising has much to do with it. And whenever I hear

one say that I say, well, how come we're all spending so much money advertising when we run for office then? [*Laughter*] If it's immaterial, let's just pull it all off and see what happens to us. [*Laughter*]

Cigarette smoking is the most significant public health problem facing our people. More Americans die every year from smoking related diseases than from AIDS, car accidents, murders, suicides, and fires combined. The human cost doesn't begin to calculate the economic costs—the thing that galvanized the legal claims of the attorneys general, the absolutely staggering burdens on the American health care system and on our economy in general.

But make no mistake about it, the human cost is by far the most important issue. For every day, even though it's illegal, 3,000 of our young people start smoking, and 1,000 of them will die earlier than they would otherwise die as a result. The vast majority of people who smoke in America today started when they were teenagers. If they don't start smoking when they're on a schoolyard, it's very likely they never will.

This epidemic is no accident. Children are bombarded daily by massive marketing campaigns that play on their vulnerabilities, their insecurities, their longings to be something in the world. Joe Camel promises that smoking will make you cool. Virginia Slims' models whisper that smoking will help you stay thin. T-shirts and sports sponsorships sends the message that healthy and vigorous people smoke and that smoking is fun.

A year ago this month, we launched a comprehensive strategy to kick tobacco out of the lives of our children. We proposed strong restrictions on advertising, marketing, and sales of cigarettes to children. In the year that followed, the FDA received a torrent of comments from the public, more than 700,000, by far the largest outpouring of public response in the FDA's history. The FDA has heard from doctors, scientists, tobacco companies, and tens of thousands of children. We have carefully considered the evidence. It is clear that the action being taken today is the right thing to do, scientifically, legally, and morally.

So today we are acting. First, young people will have to prove their age with an ID to

buy cigarettes. Second, cigarette vending machines will be banned from anywhere children and teenagers can go. Third, children will be free of tobacco advertising on billboards near their schools and playgrounds, and billboards in other locations will be restricted to black and white, text only messages. Fourth, if a tobacco ad is in a publication children and teenagers are likely to read, it also has to be black and white with no pictures. Fifth, companies will no longer be permitted to target young people with marketing gimmicks like T-shirts and gym bags. Sixth, cigarette companies may no longer use brand names to sponsor tennis tournaments, auto races, and other sporting events. Finally, the FDA will soon take steps to require the tobacco industry to educate our children about the real dangers of smoking. There is abundant evidence of both these troubling trends that a lot of young people simply don't believe there is any risk to their health. With this historic action we are taking today Joe Camel and the Marlboro Man will be out of our children's reach forever.

I want to be clear—we've said it before, let's say it again—cigarettes are a legal product for adults. They have a perfect right to decide whether to smoke. There are many, many good people who have been farming, growing tobacco for generations in their families. They have a right to make a living for themselves and their families, and they will continue to do so. But let's be honest: We hope that over the long run, if we can dramatically reduce rates of smoking among children, the overall consumption of cigarettes will decline. If that happens, these good people who farm the land and work hard should not be left behind. And all of us who have sought this course have a responsibility to help them if they face difficulties.

The cigarette companies still have a right to market their products to adults. But today we are drawing the line on children, fulfilling our obligation as adults to protect them from influences that too often are stronger than they are.

As I said before, I want to say again, this action is a tribute to so many of you who are here today, to the parents, the teachers,

the doctors, the public officials. Dr. Bristow, I particularly want to commend the AMA for its writings in its journal, its relentless efforts to educate the American people through the physicians of this country. But I'd like to pay special tribute to the children of America who have joined this crusade, who have organized and led a massive grassroots movement throughout America to educate and inform people about the dangers of tobacco smoking for children.

They've staged teach-ins and "Kick Butts" days all across the country. They have used positive peer pressure on people who could care less what a lot of us old fogies think to teach their fellow students that smoking is not cool. So I want to thank these children for the work they have done to save their generation.

A lot of the work we do around here we know will only be fully manifest in people's lives in the future. We know we can't guarantee the success of any individual or family, but we have to guarantee them the tools and the conditions that will enable them to make the most of their own lives. Today we take a real step to make sure that they have those lives in full measure. We have today met our responsibility to help our country protect its values, protect its children, and ensure its future.

Thank you all for what you've done.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:52 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Linda Crawford, widow of Victor Crawford, a former tobacco lobbyist turned antismoking advocate; Representatives Richard J. Durbin and Martin T. Meehan; Frank J. Kelley, Michigan attorney general; Mark Green, New York City public advocate; Anna Santiago, recipient of the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids Advocate of Year Award; Neal Steward McSpadden, antismoking advocate; Joseph A. Califano, Jr., president, National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University; and former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop. The Food and Drug Administration final rule on children and tobacco will be published in the *Federal Register* on August 28.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

August 17

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled from Jackson Hole, WY, to Idaho Falls, ID. Later, they returned to Washington, DC.

August 18

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary and Chelsea Clinton traveled to New York City, NY. While en route, the President had a telephone conversation with Brig. Gen. Larry Northington, USAF, Base Commander of Dyess Air Force Base, TX, concerning the crash of an Air Force transport plane in Jackson, WY.

August 19

In the morning, the President and Hillary and Chelsea Clinton traveled to Jackson, TN. In the afternoon, they traveled to Humboldt and Fruitland, TN. In the evening, they returned to Washington, DC.

August 20

In the afternoon, the President participated in a teleconference from the Oval Office with chief executive officers of the technology business community in California.

August 21

In the evening, the President attended Democratic National Committee dinners at the Mayflower Hotel and the Jefferson Hotel.

The President declared a major disaster in Iowa and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding June 15-30.

August 22

The President announced his intention to appoint Harriett M. Wieder to the Commission on United States-Pacific Trade and Investment Policy.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released August 19

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on the Presidential Emergency Board report submitted August 16

Released August 20

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Released August 21

Transcripts of press briefings by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Released August 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Released August 23

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, Commissioner of Food and Drugs David Kessler, and Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services Phil Lee on the President's initiative to protect youth from tobacco

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996

**Acts Approved
by the President**

Approved August 13

H.R. 1975 / Public Law 104-185
Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Simplification
and Fairness Act of 1996

Approved August 20

H.R. 2739 / Public Law 104-186
House of Representatives Administrative Re-
form Technical Corrections Act

H.R. 3139 / Public Law 104-187
To redesignate the United States Post Office
building located at 245 Centereach Mall on
the Middle Country Road in Centereach,
New York, as the "Rose Y. Caracappa United
States Post Office Building"

H.R. 3448 / Public Law 104-188
Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996

H.R. 3834 / Public Law 104-189
To redesignate the Dunning Post Office in
Chicago, Illinois, as the "Roger P. McAuliffe
Post Office"

H.R. 3870 / Public Law 104-190
To authorize the Agency for International
Development to offer voluntary separation
incentive payments to employees of that
agency

Approved August 21

H.R. 3103 / Public Law 104-191
Health Insurance Portability and Account-
ability Act of 1996

H.R. 3680 / Public Law 104-192
War Crimes Act of 1996

Approved August 22

H.R. 3734 / Public Law 104-193
Personal Responsibility and Work Oppor-
tunity Reconciliation Act of 1996

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