

Statement on Proposed Child Care Legislation

March 16, 1999

Making child care better, safer, and more affordable is at the heart of my effort to help America's parents balance their responsibilities at home and at work. Today, more than ever, parents struggle to find high quality, affordable child care for their children. That is why I have proposed significant new investments in child care, expanding subsidies and providing greater tax relief for working families, increasing after-school opportunities for children, improving child care quality, and providing new tax relief for parents who choose to stay at home.

I am pleased that today key Members of the House of Representatives took steps to move us closer to enacting meaningful child care legislation. Representative Ben Cardin introduced important new legislation—the “Child Care Improvement Act of 1999”—that, like my proposal, addresses the critical child care needs of working families. And Representative Ellen Tauscher and numerous Democratic colleagues introduced a comprehensive child care package—the “Affordable Child Care, Education, and Security Act”—that incorporates many of my proposals and would go a long way to fully addressing the child care demands of working families. These bills would help Americans fulfill their responsibilities as workers and their even more important responsibilities as parents. I look forward to working with Representative Cardin, Representative Tauscher, and other Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle to meet the child care needs of America's families.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Stuart, Florida

March 16, 1998

If I had any judgment at all, I would not say a word. *[Laughter]* I had forgotten we did some of those things. *[Laughter]*

You know, when we came in this magnificent home tonight and I was looking around and commenting on the spiral staircase, Reverend Jackson said, “You know, Mr.

President, you and Hillary live in the White House. Willie and Gloria live in a white house. The only difference is they've got more floor space, and they're not term-limited.” *[Laughter]*

Let me say to the Garys, to Willie, to Gloria, to your mother, your children, your grandchildren how honored I am to be here with all of our crew from the White House tonight, along with Joe Andrew and Beth Dozoretz from the Democratic Party; how delighted I am to be here with my good friend Reverend Jackson who is also my Special Envoy to Africa. And I'll say a little more about that in a moment.

I thank Congressman Hastings and Congressman Deutsch for coming down here with me tonight. I thank Bishop Ray and my good friend Bishop Graves and the other members of the clergy who are here, and the college presidents. I thought the Drifters and Ernestine Diller were both just great. And I thank them for entertaining us. And I'd like to thank the people who prepared and served our food and our drinks tonight. I thank them very much for what they did.

You know, when Willie was talking about raising the average income of African-American households, I thought, you know, I didn't have to do anything; he did that all by himself. *[Laughter]*

Let me say—I have to say one thing on a serious note—some of you are here tonight who meant to be here at noon in Palm Beach. I was supposed to have a lunch in Palm Beach at noon. And the reason we couldn't do that is that the son of two of our hosts, Mel and Bren Simon, dropped dead of a tragic heart attack at a very young age in London a couple of days ago. And they're good friends of mine; they're wonderful people. They're part owners of the Indiana Pacers basketball team, among other things. And I would just like to ask all of you tonight—I know that all of us—I called Hillary who knows Mrs. Simon, in particular. I called her today when we heard about this, and I just talked to them. It just took her breath away. All of us who have been parents can only imagine the agony that we would feel. So I ask for you tonight, I want to go back to having a good time, but I ask you to say a little prayer for them when you go home tonight.