

meet higher academic standards, finish, not drop out of high school, and go on to college.

It will take time for these efforts to have an impact, but you can help at the local level. Hold up these young scholarship winners as an example to the young people in your communities. We cannot make America what it ought to be in the 21st century unless we dramatically reduce the 30 percent dropout rate among Hispanic-American children.

As many of your leaders have told me, not withstanding our best intentions in this administration, we have a lot more to do to make sure that the States and the school districts who accept Federal dollars actually spend those dollars in a way that reaches underserved Hispanic students, and we are working on that, as well.

Let me finally make this one point. I have always wanted an administration that looks like America. You've heard me say that a dozen times, I bet. More and more, America will look like you. More and more, there will be more people listening and more people performing like Ricky Martin and Jennifer Lopez. There will be more books. There will be more movies. There will be a bigger part of our culture.

And what I ask you to do as you rise in dominance and influence, not only in our political life but in our cultural life, is never to forget your roots and never forget the pain of discrimination or being ignored, and make sure that you are always a force for good, for building one America.

If you look around this old world today, the biggest problem I have faced as your President in my responsibilities around the world is dealing with the racial and the ethnic and the religious and the tribal conflicts where people occupy the same land and cannot get along; where they continue to believe what is different about them is more important than their common humanity; where they fear people who are different from them and get to the point where they look down on them and in some places—God forbid—they think it's even okay to kill them.

And if you look all over the world today, we celebrate the modern world—modern music, modern culture, the Internet, the decoding of the human gene—all these things that are going on. A lot of your young people

probably want to go to work for these Internet companies, where there are dozens and dozens of young people in their twenties now worth \$50 million. That's chump change to some of them. It's all great, all this modern world, but don't forget the biggest problem is the oldest problem of the human heart—the fear and hatred of people who are different.

So I ask you to remember this. You are growing in numbers; you are growing in influence. You will grow in ways that are good and will make America richer, more alive, more textured, more exciting. And it's all going to be positive. But don't forget what you've been through. And do everything you can to stop it from happening within America and beyond our borders. We are still, for all of our modern advances, too much in the grip of the oldest fears of the human heart. And your community can make all the difference for 21st century America.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:36 a.m. in the Grand Ballroom at McCormick Place. In his remarks, he referred to Juan Andrade, Jr., president and executive director, and Rey Gonzalez, board chairman, U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute; singer Ricky Martin; and actress/singer Jennifer Lopez.

### **Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report on Naval Petroleum Reserves**

*October 8, 1999*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

In accordance with section 201(3) of the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976 (10 U.S.C. 7422)(c)(2), I am informing you of my decision to extend the period of production of the naval petroleum reserves for a period of 3 years from April 5, 2000, the expiration date of the currently authorized period of production.

Attached is a copy of the report investigating the necessity of continued production of the reserves as required by 10 U.S.C. 7422(c)(2)(B). In light of the findings contained in that report, I certify that continued

production from the naval petroleum reserves is in the national interest.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
October 8, 1999.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 12.

**Statement on Signing the  
Department of Transportation and  
Related Agencies Appropriations  
Act, 2000**

*October 9, 1999*

I have signed into law H.R. 2084, the “Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2000.” The bill provides \$47.1 billion in funding for the Nation’s vital transportation and related safety needs. The record level of infrastructure investment provided by this measure, which I requested, will enhance use and efficiency, provide better connections, and help improve the conditions and performance of the Nation’s transportation system.

This bill’s funding levels for highway and transit programs will allow us to continue making substantial improvements in travel conditions and transit ridership. Completing the full funding of our request for Coast Guard operating expenses will improve the safety of all Americans by enabling the expansion of the Coast Guard’s vital search and rescue, law enforcement, and drug interdiction activities. Provision of our request for Amtrak capital funds will improve passenger service and keep the rail service on the 5-year glide path to operating self-sufficiency that was agreed to in 1997 by the Congress and my Administration.

I am concerned about the funding level provided in the bill for Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) operations and capital programs. For example, the bill provides \$144 million less than my request for FAA operations. This reduction will slow hiring for safety and security positions and postpone implementation of needed efficiency and management improvements. The bill also constrains funding for the modernization of the air traffic control system, including need-

ed modernization and improvement of the Global Positioning System. These reductions may increase air travel delays and ill-position the FAA to meet the growing challenges of the future. My Administration will work with the Congress to rectify the consequences of these harmful reductions.

Section 321 of this bill again blocks the Department of Transportation from evaluating corporate average fuel economy standards to determine whether the vehicles we drive can be more fuel efficient. Because of similar provisions, the Department has been unable to carry out its responsibility to review this issue for several years, during which time the average fuel economy has dropped to its lowest level since 1980, adding to pollution and to the Nation’s dependency on imported oil. I am very disturbed by this limitation on my Administration’s ability to address this critical issue. We cannot continue to ignore this. For that reason, we will soon invite the leaders of the auto industry to the White House to try to find a way to address this issue notwithstanding the limitation in this bill.

I appreciate the increase in funding for motor carrier safety provided in the bill, as it is the goal of the Secretary of Transportation to reduce motor carrier safety fatalities by 50 percent within 10 years. However, I am disappointed that the full funding requested for motor carrier safety grants to States was not provided, as this funding is needed to help achieve this goal. I am also concerned about language that precludes enforcement action, and my Administration will work with the Congress to address this problem.

I am also troubled by the widespread earmarking of vital highway and transit programs without regard to criteria that have been established to ensure that these are sound investments. For example, a number of projects specified for the Job Access and Reverse Commute program are strictly for research, an activity that would not otherwise be eligible for this funding. In general, earmarks tend to be aimed at projects that have not advanced in the local planning process and, as a result, the funding will likely remain unused for a longer period of time, depriving