

violate the First Amendment of the Constitution. It is important to avoid constitutional challenge to this legislation and to ensure that the Act does not chill protected speech. Accordingly, I will broadly construe the Act's exception and will interpret it to require a determination of the value of the depiction as part of a work or communication, taken as a whole. So construed, the Act would prohibit the types of depictions, described in the statute's legislative history, of wanton cruelty to animals designed to appeal to a prurient interest in sex. I will direct the Department of Justice to enforce the Act accordingly.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
December 9, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 1887, approved December 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106-152.

**Statement on Signing the U.S.  
Holocaust Assets Commission  
Extension Act of 1999**

*December 9, 1999*

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 2401, the "U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Extension Act of 1999." This legislation, which extends the mandate of the Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States for 1 year, is a clear demonstration of America's determination to pursue justice for Holocaust victims and their families.

The United States has led the renewed struggle for justice and compensation on behalf of the victims of the Holocaust. One year ago, delegations from 44 countries and 13 nongovernmental organizations met at the Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets convened by the Department of State and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. During the Washington Conference, I announced the public and governmental members of the Presidential Advisory Commission, which was created to investigate and advise on the fate of Holocaust victims' assets that came into the possession or control of the United States Government.

Since then, the Presidential Advisory Commission has been hard at work and esti-

mates that it will have to examine more than 45 million pages of documents. To our Nation's credit, the amount of information to be reviewed increases every week as remaining Nazi-era documents are declassified. The U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Extension Act of 1999 provides the Presidential Advisory Commission with additional time and authorizes additional resources needed to complete the review of the historical record of American activity during one of the darkest periods of this century.

The Commission's research demonstrates irrefutably that we in the United States are willing to hold ourselves to the same high standard of truth about Holocaust assets to which we have held other nations. The extension of the Presidential Advisory Commission sends a strong message, both at home and abroad, that we are committed to examining difficult aspects of our history and determining how to build a better world for our children in the next millennium.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
December 9, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 2401, approved December 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106-155.

**Statement on Signing the John H.  
Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources  
System Act**

*December 9, 1999*

I am pleased to sign into law S. 1866, the "John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System Act." Renaming the Coastal Barrier Resources System in Senator Chafee's honor is an appropriate tribute to a man who worked so hard—and so successfully—to find common ground in the struggle to protect and preserve the environment for future generations.

Senator Chafee authored the Coastal Barrier Resources Act, a law which protects pristine and fragile coastal barriers from development by restricting Federal expenditures that would otherwise encourage such development. This Act has successfully minimized the loss of human life by discouraging development in high-risk areas. It also has reduced

the wasteful expenditures of Federal resources and protected the natural resources associated with coastal barriers. Today, approximately 3 million acres of fragile coastal barrier lands are part of the Coastal Barrier Resources System created by the Act.

Senator Chafee's legacy of achievements in environmental protection is extraordinary and far ranging. He worked tirelessly to ensure the protection of our land, air, and water and he took special pride in the success of the Coastal Barrier Resources Act. For this reason, it is especially fitting that we honor Senator Chafee by renaming the Coastal Barrier Resources System as the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
December 9, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 1866, approved December 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106-167.

### **Statement on Signing the Digital Theft Deterrence and Copyright Damages Improvement Act of 1999**

*December 9, 1999*

Today I have signed into law H.R. 3456, the "Digital Theft Deterrence and Copyright Damages Improvement Act of 1999." This legislation will increase for the first time since January 1988 the statutory damages that a copyright holder may recover for certain copyright infringements. This increase in penalties would be an effective deterrent to would-be pirates of copyrighted works. This Act also directs the United States Sentencing Commission to issue sentencing guidelines to ensure that sentences for criminal offenses against intellectual property are sufficiently severe to deter such offenses. I fully support efforts to make sentences in criminal cases involving intellectual property offenses true deterrents against the commission of those offenses and am pleased that H.R. 3456 will require the Sentencing Com-

mission to address this matter on an expedited basis.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
December 9, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 3456, approved December 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106-160.

### **Message on the Observance of Ramadan, 1999**

*December 9, 1999*

Warm greetings to Muslims across America and around the world as you celebrate the start of Ramadan, a holy month of prayer, fasting, reflection, and good works.

Islam is one of the world's most prominent religions and a source of profound strength and guidance for millions of Americans. Members of the Muslim American community have made enormous contributions to our national life. I am especially pleased that my alma mater, Georgetown University, has named its first Muslim chaplain, reflecting the increasing recognition in our country of the Islamic faith and our firm commitment to religious tolerance. Sadly, in too many communities around the world, Muslims and other believers are unable to worship according to their religious traditions. We look forward to the day when people of all faiths can freely express their beliefs without fear of persecution or discrimination.

Each year, Ramadan brings a promise of renewal and hope for the world. I pray that, as the new moon rises, we will witness the beginning of a new era of tolerance around the globe. As the followers of Islam celebrate the revelation of God's word to Muhammad, we join you in honoring his call for harmony and peace.

**Bill Clinton**

### **Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner**

*December 9, 1999*

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. It's been a long, but a wonderful, night.