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36 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 775

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Public Papers of the Presidents

April 8, 2000

CITE: 36 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 775**LENGTH:** 5402 words**HEADLINE:** Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Luncheon in New Orleans, Louisiana**BODY:**

Thank you. Well, thank you very much, Arnold. And Celia, thank you. We would have all come here today just to see your beautiful home. And unless you're lucky, half of us may take a swim before we leave. [Laughter] But I thank you so much for opening your home and for reminding me of that speech that I gave. It seems like a long time ago in one way, and another just like yesterday.

I want to thank my good friend Sheriff Harry Lee, who proved to me that you could get bad press and the people would stay with you. [Laughter] So I simply decided to test the theory, and it got a little out of hand. [Laughter] Now, that's a crack I probably wouldn't make anyplace in America outside of Louisiana. [Laughter]

I got tickled when Mayor Rendell said he'd never met anybody like Ray Reggie. I thought, that's true, but if you stayed down here long enough, you'll meet 4 or 500 people you never met anybody like before and never will again. [Laughter]

So Ray, thank you. Thank you, David Young. Thank you, Mary Lou Winters. I want to congratulate our young State representative, Karen Carter. Her father has been a friend of mine forever. And once Karen came up and accosted me and chewed me out over something she thought I was wrong about, and then she later thought maybe she'd gone too far. And I told her daddy that I'd be proud if my daughter could talk to the President that way. [Laughter] Not because -- because she wasn't disrespectful; she was just aggressive and articulate. And I'm glad to see her being so successful.

And Mrs. Morial, it's nice to see you. I want to say a special word of thanks to Bill and Andrea Jefferson for being here. Bill Jefferson was for me when only my mother thought I could be elected President. [Laughter] In our immediate household, it was a close call. So I thank him for all of his friendship and support over the years.

And I thank all of you who worked so hard to raise these funds for our party. I want to thank all the young people who worked on this event. And my friend Mayor Rendell -- you know, when I first met Ed Rendell, we went to Philadelphia. I was running for President, and he took me to a neighborhood where he had worked to eradicate gangs and drugs, in a very poor neighborhood. And we walked down the street, and I could see his evident pride that he had helped to change the lives of people who were very often overlooked by other public officials. And then we got to the end of the street, and he challenged me to shoot baskets. There was a little park there. And even though he knew I might become President, he beat me anyway -- [Laughter] -- which I sort of respected. And we've been friends ever since. And I have been waiting for 8 years for a chance to get even. And when I

talked him into becoming chairman of the Democratic Party I said, "You know, it's just a little part-time job; it won't take much work." [Laughter] He had a full head of hair when he took this job. [Laughter]

But he's really been wonderful. And I think it's a great thing to have our party headed by someone who's actually been elected to something, served people at the grassroots level, understands the problems and the promise of all different kinds of people. And Philadelphia is a magnificent city that's been very good to me and to the Vice President. So I want to thank him.

I've been to Louisiana a lot since I've been President, about half as many times as I would have liked to have been. And I want to thank you all, and through you and the media here, to all the people of this State, for voting for me twice for President and for giving me the chance to serve.

I am a little perplexed some days that this is the first time since 1974 they've held an election and my name hasn't been on a ballot. [Laughter] I like to joke that most days I'm all right about that. So today I'd like to talk to you from the perspective of someone who is not a candidate but is profoundly grateful for what this country has given to me and for what this State has done for me. I'm grateful that I had the chance to serve at a very crucial moment in American history, when we were in need of making some difficult decisions about what kind of country we were going to be and how we were going to prepare for a new century.

And I guess I want to make just two or three brief points, because when you come to a deal like this I'm sure maybe for a few days afterward people say, "Well, what was it like? And what did the President say? And was it really worth all the money it cost you to go? And why did you do such a stupid thing?" [Laughter] I'm sure you get asked all those questions. So I'd just like you to think about a few things.

First of all, this country is in a lot better shape than it was in 1992. We had high unemployment, high interest rates, low growth, almost no new jobs, our social problems like crime and welfare were getting worse, and we didn't seem to have any governing vision for taking us into the new century. And I think ideas matter a lot.

You mentioned -- Ed Rendell made the remark about what a diverse group we have here, and he made a remark about the contributions of people who have brought lawsuits on behalf of injured people that I agree with, but I -- sometimes I get criticized from the other side because I want to pay America's debt off. One columnist, a couple of weeks ago, who is a friend of mine, a man I admire very much, accused me of embracing Calvin Coolidge economics. I'll explain why; I'm going to do it in a minute. But the point is, when I ran in '92, I had been, as President Bush said, the Governor of a small southern State, somewhere to the north of here. And I was so dumb, I thought he was complimenting me when he said that. [Laughter] I was kind of proud of it, myself. I still am, to tell the truth. And the way Washington worked didn't make a lick of sense to me. I mean, there was a liberal position and a conservative position; there was a Democratic position and there was a Republican position. And the one thing that you couldn't do without being accused of heresy is try to unlock the differences or come out with a third position that would go beyond both of them. And it looked to me like it was a very serviceable setup for politicians who needed to get on the news for 15 seconds every night, because only conflict will guarantee you a place on the airwaves. But it wasn't doing very much good for the American people.

And so I asked the people to give me a chance to try a different way. I really believed we could have a country that could get rid of the deficit and still increase our investment in education and our children and their future. I believed we could grow the economy and improve the environment. I thought we could be pro-business and pro-labor. I thought we could get rid of unnecessary Government bureaucracy and still be more vigorous in the pursuit of those things we saw to be pursued. I believed all that.

And I remember when I first started giving these talks, the people who had been covering politics for years looked at me as if I were some sort of heretic or it was just political gobbledy-gook.

But first I want to say, ideas matter. Because after 8 years, we have -- instead of record deficits and a debt that was quadrupled under the previous administrations and their theories, we've got the first back-to-back surpluses in 42 years and the longest economic expansion in history and the lowest minority unemployment ever recorded and the lowest overall unemployment in 30 years, the lowest female unemployment in 40 years.

So we did it by being pro-business and pro-labor. We did it by getting rid of the deficit, and we've about doubled our investment in education and training for our children and dramatically increased access to college and raised the standards for education. So, you can do these things.

The air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the food is safer. We've tripled the number of toxic waste dumps we cleaned up over the previous two administrations. And the economy is stronger. So it makes sense.

We've got a stronger Federal Government, but it's the smallest Government since 1960. We've eliminated hundreds of programs, and I will give anyone here the ticket price here -- I'll give you your money back if you can stand up right now and name three of them. Any takers? [Laughter]

I say that because I didn't think it was anti-Democratic or anti-progressive to recognize that we had programs on the books that were no longer serviceable, that just kept getting funded because people couldn't think of anything better to do with the money. And we were up to our ears in debt, and we had to get out. And we needed the money for education; we needed the money for health care; we needed the money for the environment; we needed the money for helping poor people move from welfare to work.

So that's the first thing I want to say to you. Ideas really matter. I've learned that in over 20 years of public life and over 7 years of being your President. One of the reasons that I support the Vice President is that he understands the future. He understands the importance of ideas; he knows how to get us there. These things aren't just slogans to him. I've spent too many hours with him doing too much work, making too many difficult decisions.

The second thing I want to tell you is, our adversaries are smart, and they want back in the world's worst way. And they figured out the way to do it is to try to blur the differences within the party until they get in and they start appointing their judges and passing their bills and doing their thing. But in the meanwhile, they'd like to blur the differences.

So I want to tell you there are differences. Let me just cite a few. We worked hard to turn this deficit around and start running these surpluses. And we're paying off the debt at a rapid rate. Now, I'm not against a tax cut. I'm actually for a tax cut if it's small enough to enable us to save Social Security, reform Medicare, and add a prescription drug benefit to the 70 percent of our seniors that can't afford it today; continue to invest in education, health care, and the environment and science and technology and research; and pay the debt off. We can get out of debt, for the first time since 1835, in 12 years. And I think we ought to do it, not just because it sounds good, but because if we keep paying the debt down, we'll keep interest rates down, and there will be more money for people to borrow to start businesses, to hire people, to invest in their equipment, to move the economy along. That's what I think.

Now, in spite of all that, I still have offered a tax cut, and the Vice President has offered one, I think, in the campaign, in the same range. We could give people a \$ 3,000 tax credit for long-term care costs for their parents or disabled relatives; let people deduct the cost of college tuition for their kids, up to \$ 10,000 a year; increase the child care tax credit; increase the earned-income tax credit for lower income working people. Nobody who works for a living and has kids at home should be in poverty. The tax system ought to take them out. That's what I believe.

We still have a sizeable tax system. We could even give them some relief on the marriage penalty, an issue where our Republican friends say they're interested. But I don't think we ought to do that at

the expense of what got us here. We've got the longest economic expansion in history because we said we're going to get rid of the deficit, invest in education and technology, and sell more American products around the world. That's how we got here. And so there's a big difference.

What's the difference? The other party wants a tax cut even bigger than the one I vetoed last year. Even bigger. Now, they'll tell you they're for education; they're for the environment; they're for this, that, and the other thing. The truth is they're not going to have any money. They promised this huge tax cut and even bigger increases in defense than I've advocated, and the money won't be there. Or if they do spend this money, it means that we won't be able to save Social Security for the baby boom generation's retirement. Or it means we go back and start running a deficit again, and we'll have all the same problems we had the last time we did that.

Now, so I would say to you, I don't think this is rocket science. What they're running on -- now, they're using different words and blurring the distinctions, but what they're running on is the exact same economic program they pursued for the last 12 years the last time. And so the American people -- when they ask you why you're here, you say, "Well, I think we're better off than we were 8 years ago, and we've got a choice that's the same choice we had before about which economic strategy we're going to follow." Except in 1992, you took a chance on me, but in 2000, you now have evidence about how their system works and how ours works. And you need to tell people about this.

Because every day all these folks are going to be saying different things. All the ones running for Senate and Congress and President, they're all going to be emphasizing this issue and that. But I'm telling you, I've been there. You can make promises until the cows come home, but if you're going to deliver the promises, there is a price tag on it, and it all has to add up in the end. Or if it doesn't add up, you're going to cut something else or start running deficits again.

The central thing you need to know about the economic differences between the parties is, after I vetoed that huge tax cut last year to keep the economy going -- and I might add, after I did it, the economic growth in the last quarter of last year was 7.3 percent, the biggest in a coon's age. Nobody can remember when that was -- *[laughter]* -- forever and ever. Nobody can remember that.

Now, they come back and say, "That tax cut he vetoed wasn't big enough; we want a bigger one." And let me tell you what's on the other side. The number of people over 65 in this country is going to double in the next 30 years. I hope to be one of them. There will be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. The baby boom generation -- that's anybody here between the ages of 54 and 36 -- and I can only tell you about the older baby boomers, because I was born in the first generation of them -- we are panicked about the prospect that our retirement might undermine our children's ability to raise our grand-children.

Now, we've got the money right now, if we don't throw it away, we have the money right now to pledge the interest savings from paying down the debt to the Social Security Trust Fund and take it out to 2054 -- 54 years from today -- beyond the life of all but the most fortunate baby boomers. We ought to do it. And it's more important to your long-term financial health than a tax cut we can't afford.

If we were starting Medicare again today -- now, we're for that; they're not -- if we were starting Medicare again today, we would never design a Medicare program without a prescription drug component. When Medicare was set up 35 years ago, it was basically a critical care program, the fund covered doctor and hospital bills. Now, anybody that lives to be 65 years old has got a life expectancy of 83 years, and it's going to keep going up.

There needs to be more attention to preventive care, to chronic problems, to all kinds of things that medicine can have a big impact on. And literally, almost three-quarters of our seniors either don't have any or don't have any or don't have an adequate and affordable prescription drug coverage. It's a big deal. You overdo the tax cut, you can't cover enough people. And we have differences on how many people we want to cover with them.

In education, it's fine to say you want to have higher standards for our schools and all these other good programs, but you've still got to pay for them. They've still got to be paid for. Our program is, repair our schools that need repairing, build thousands of new schools, hook them all up to the Internet, put another 100,000 teachers out there -- 2 million teachers are going to retire in the next few years, and more kids in the schools than ever before. So I think we ought to help put more teachers in the early grades. Have higher standards, but give schools the help they need for after-school, for summer school, for the reading, the mentoring program, so that you don't blame kids for the failure of the system. I've got no problem with ending social promotion and having higher standards, but if you're going to do it, you've got to give the kids a chance to succeed. And I think most people believe that. So there are differences. And it all starts on the economic front with this.

There are also differences on a lot of other issues. I'm trying to raise the **minimum wage** a buck a year over 2 years. And they won't just pass a clean **minimum wage** bill; they're trying to get a humongous tax cut out of it. But you know, the last time we raised the **minimum wage**, about 6 years ago, they said, "Oh, boy, this will drive up unemployment." Twenty-one million jobs later, we know that if you've got a good economic policy and a strong economy, paying people a decent wage who are working hard does not hurt the economy. And it's time to raise it again.

And do you know, if we raise it again, it would still be, in real dollar terms, we'd still only be back where we were about 30 years ago, in terms of the purchasing power? So we ought to raise it. We're for it; they're not.

On the gun issue -- I grew up down here. I grew up in a culture that valued hunting, sport shooting. When I signed the Brady bill there was the awfulest commotion you ever heard in the assault weapons ban. People said, oh, they were going to lose their guns and all that. We heard all that stuff. Well, nobody has missed an hour in the deer woods. But 7 years later, 500,000 people -- felons, fugitives, and stalkers -- have not gotten handguns, and it could be a reason why we have a 30-year low in gun death rates.

So now the issue is, should there be child trigger locks on the guns; should we ban the import of large capacity ammunition clips, which makes a mockery of the assault weapons ban because you just import the clips, then you adjust the gun to take the new clip; and should we do a background check at the gun shows?

Now, when we passed the Brady bill, the people that were against it said it won't do you any good to do a background check of people who buy guns from gun stores because all the criminals buy their guns at the gun shows. I said, "Oh, surely some buy their guns at the gun stores." And sure enough, a half-million did anyway. [Laughter] So now I go back to the same people and I say, "You remember when you told me 7 years ago all these people were buying their guns at the gun shows? Well, we have the technology to do these background checks now, they're not particularly burdensome, let's do them." They said, "Oh, my goodness, we couldn't do that. It would be the end of civilization as we know it." [Laughter]

And all I can tell you is, I think it will keep kids alive. And I have never done anything, to the best of my knowledge, not one thing in my public life that interfered with the legitimate rights of hunters and other lawful gun owners. That is not what this is about. It's not about scare tactics and slogans.

Somebody asked me the other day what I thought about all the mean things Charlton Heston has said about me. I said, "I like his movies very much." [Laughter] And I actually -- he came to the White House a couple of years ago for the Kennedy Center Honors -- I liked him very much. This is just a difference of opinion here.

I think it's really unfair to even say the Republicans are sort of in the pocket of the NRA, as if they're doing something they don't believe. I think they believe that. We think differently about this. This is a difference of opinion.

They believe that basically this is the one area of our national life -- guns -- where there should be no prevention, all punishment. They do say -- and I've increased gun prosecutions and want to increase them some more, and they're going to support me on that, I think -- give us more prosecutors and all that. But they believe the only answer is wait until somebody breaks the law and throw the book at them. But this is the one area of our national life where we can't have prevention.

Well, you think about that. We have prevention everywhere else. We've got cross-walks for walking across the street, trying to keep people from getting run over. We put seatbelts on when we get in the car, trying to keep our heads from going through the dashboard. We put our kids in these child safety seats, trying to keep them from flying around if we have to slam on the brakes. We've got speed limits. We have airport metal detectors. Why do we have all this stuff? Most people are law-abiding, sensible, careful, and safe, in every endeavor. But you still do what you can to stop bad things from happening in the first place, right? I mean, that's what you do. When it's your family and your life and your kids, that's what you do. And that's what smart societies do. All this is about is whether we're going to do sensible things to prevent bad things from happening.

I said it in my press conference the other day -- I don't know if any of you saw it -- I said, what do you think the country would think of me if I said, "You know, I'm really worried about how many people are crowding in our airports and how hot they are and tired they are and pushed together they are. And 99.9 percent of them are the best people you ever want to meet in your life. They're totally law-abiding; they would never think of doing anything. And it drives them nuts to be late for an airplane and go through one of these metal detectors; and they've got a rodeo belt on or a big, old, heavy money clip, and they go, 'bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing.' They have to go out, and you take everything out of your pockets, you go through it, it goes off again, and you have to go out and do it again. It just drives them nuts. And I just think it's so burdensome, and since almost all of them are law-abiding, let's just take them all out. And the next time a plane blows up, we'll throw the book at them." [Laughter]

Now, that is the logic. That is the logic behind not doing these background checks. But man, this has got nothing to do with the deer season. It's got nothing to do with the gun shows. It's got nothing to do with anything. It's a question of whether you believe there should be prevention in this area of our national life.

See, I believe America could be the safest big country in the world. When I got elected President, nobody even thought the crime rate could go down. I did because I'd been out to places like Philadelphia. I'd seen this. I believe America can be the safest big country in the world now. And if I were running the NRA, I would have a whole different take on this. I'd say, "I'd like to prove that you can have the safest big country in the world and still have people who like to go hunting, go to these shooting contests and have a good time, own guns lawfully, be trained carefully, that use them." I'd like to prove that. I wouldn't be against all this prevention stuff. I think prevention is an important part of life. But there are differences here. And you know what the other differences are.

So the first thing I want to say is, the country is in better shape. Ideas matter. We've tested ours; we've tested theirs. On the economy, they want to do what they did before. And if you do it, you'll get the same consequences you got before. And all the other things they talk about, all of them running for all these offices, you have to view in view of their commitment to a tax cut even bigger than the one I vetoed.

The second thing I want to say is, I think these other issues matter: what you do in education; what you do with the environment; what you do with crime and how you do it.

The last thing I want to say is this. The Democrats have lost some votes since I've been in here, I'm quite sure because we take a very inclusive view of society, and we don't believe that people ought to be discriminated against just because they're female, just because of their race, just because they're handicapped, or even if they're gay -- in the workplace -- subject to hate crimes or anything else. That's what we believe. And some people are threatened by that, and they don't think we're good Americans, and they won't vote for us. But I think most people are with us on this.

My view of this is real simple. I think if you get up every day and you show up for work and you go about your business, you obey the law, you pay your taxes, you're a good citizen, you ought to have a chance to live in this country and live up to the fullest of your ability, and nobody ought to get in your way doing it. That's what I believe. That's what I believe.

And I believe that -- I think that we define our sense of community in terms of how we live. They, I think, believe we define our sense of community more in terms of whether we say we believe the same things. And all I can tell you is, if you think about the time I've spent since I've been President working on peace around the world, what's the problem in the Middle East, in Northern Ireland, in Bosnia, in Kosovo, in the tribal wars in Africa, all these places? People killing each other because they're different -- racial, ethnic, tribal groups, or religious groups. Different, right?

Why did that guy in Los Angeles shoot those kids at the Jewish community center and kill that Filipino postman? Why did that guy in the middle West, who said he belonged to a church that didn't believe in God but did believe in white supremacy, shoot the black former basketball coach at Northwestern and the Korean Christian when he was coming out of church, and three or four other people? Why was young Matthew Shepard stretched out on a rack in Wyoming? And why was James Byrd dragged to death in Texas? And what has all this got to do with us?

I really believe one of the great challenges every person's life faces -- every person, even people who themselves have been discriminated against -- is figuring out how to get it right when it comes to how to deal with people who are different from you, and how to find a way to appreciate other people's differences, enjoy them, and still somehow feel that what we have in common is more important than what is different about it. And that's hard to do. And the more I try to make peace around the world, the more I understand how much progress we've made in this country, for all of our problems. It's hard to do.

And all over the world, people are raised to believe that they can identify themselves as good by having somebody else to look down on, that their religion only has meaning if somebody else's doesn't. They were raised to have pride insofar as it's set off against, in conflict with, somebody else. It's not just American. This is everywhere. And in this most modern of worlds, we are bedeviled by this old conflict.

So I just want you to think about that. If somebody gave me one wish today, they said, "I'm sorry you can't finish your term; you've got to check out tomorrow" -- and God came down to me and said, "I'm no genie. You're not getting three wishes. I'll give you one" -- I would not wish for prosperity or even a Democratic victory in November. I would wish that this country could truly be one America, across all the lines that divide it. Because we're smart people; we're good people; we work hard. If we could ever get our hearts and minds right about this stuff, the rest of it would work out. That's what I believe.

And I'll just leave you with this thought. The most important question of all in this election is, what are we going to do with our prosperity? Are we going to make one America? Are we going to give everybody a chance to be a part of it? And are we going to meet our big, long-term challenges? The biggest danger for the Democrats in this race is that people will do what they often do when things are going along well; they'll get relaxed. They won't concentrate. They won't feel a sense of urgency. And they'll either stay home, or they won't be sharply focused on what this could be about.

How many times -- everybody here over 30, how many times have you ever made a mistake in your life, not because you were under the gun but because things were going along so well you didn't think there were any consequences to what you did today? Now, that's the big question here. What will we do with this unique moment of prosperity?

In other words, all these differences only matter, that I just went through to you, if we're going to do something about it. And the only thing I'd like to tell you about that is, the older I get, the more my friends pass away, the faster time goes, and the more I realize nothing lasts forever. And I say that

not to be morbid. I'm the most optimistic person you'll ever meet. I believe in the promise of America. I believe no one is irreplaceable. I believe in our country only freedom is irreplaceable. I don't believe there is anybody, including me, who's irreplaceable. But I believe moments come and go.

And the last time we had an expansion like this was in the 1960's. It was the last time we had the longest economic expansion in history. And it's when I graduated from high school, in 1964, where everybody thought the economy would go on forever; we would never get mired down in Vietnam; the cold war would be over before you knew it because we were good and strong; and civil rights would be solved in the courts and in the Congress -- 1964, middle of the big expansion.

When I graduated from college 4 years after that, it was 2 days after Robert Kennedy had been killed, 2 months after Martin Luther King had been killed, 9 weeks after Lyndon Johnson said he couldn't run for President because the country was too divided over the Vietnam war. Mr. Nixon got elected President. He was a very able man, but he got elected President on one of these "us" and "them" divisive campaigns. He represented the Silent Majority, and those of us that were on the other side, we were in the loud minority. We were kind of out of the club there. And a few months later, the longest expansion in American history was over, boom! And we blew a chance to solve a lot of our problems in a wholesome, peaceful way.

Now, I'm not running for anything, but as an American citizen, I want to tell you, I've waited 35 years for that opportunity to roll around again for my country, where we could build the future of our dreams for our children. Ideas matter; there are differences. We've got to do this together.

The most important thing right now is that we focus on the importance of this election. Do not take our prosperity for granted. Do not take our social progress for granted. Do not take your ability to even come to something like this for granted. We've got to make the most of this. If we do, we'll be proud for the rest of our lives. If we don't, we'll never forgive ourselves. This is a moment for making tomorrow. That's why you came today. If somebody asks, you tell them that.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:05 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon hosts Arnold and Celia Lupin; Harry Lee, sheriff, Jefferson Parish, LA; Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee (DNC); luncheon cochair Ray Reggie; David Nelson Young, Louisiana DNC national committeeman; Mary Lou Winters, vice chair, Louisiana State Democratic Party; Louisiana State Representative Karen Carter; Sybil Morial, wife of Mayor Marc H. Morial of New Orleans; and Representative William J. Jefferson and his wife, Andrea.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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shelter for the second straight winter.

Finally, we've waited too long for commonsense gun safety legislation. Last year, with a tie-breaking vote by Vice President Gore, the Senate passed a bill that would require child safety locks for every handgun sold, ban the importation of large ammunition clips, and close the loophole that allows criminals to buy firearms at gun shows. Unfortunately, the House failed to pass similar measures. And even more disturbing, 9 months now have gone by, and the Congress has taken almost no action to complete a bill for me to sign.

Every day we wait, 89 Americans -- 12 of them young people -- are killed by gunfire. Of course, no legislation can prevent every act of gun violence or every gun accident. But when there are simple safety measures we can take, measures that will save lives. There is absolutely no excuse for sitting on our hands. Two days ago Senators from both parties voted to push congressional negotiators to produce a final gun bill by April the 20th, the anniversary of Columbine. That's the very least we can do.

With only a week to go before recess, I ask the congressional leaders to think about these daily tallies: 12 children dying from gunfire; thousands of managed care patients suffering unnecessary declines in health; millions of working families missing out on a long-overdue raise. These are just some of the everyday costs of failing to do the people's business. So let's get back on track. Let's work together to protect the health, the safety, the welfare of the American people. Let's safeguard their financial security, and in so doing, our national security. And let's do it now.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3:00 p.m. on April 7 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 8. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 8 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

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Public Papers of the Presidents

March 10, 2000

CITE: 36 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 514**LENGTH:** 1424 words**HEADLINE:** Remarks Announcing the Initiative To Reduce Air Travel Delays**BODY:**

Thank you very much. I want to thank Secretary Slater and Jane Garvey and the airline executives who are here, the representatives of the airline pilots, the air traffic controllers, and the other aviation leaders who have made a truly remarkable team for this announcement.

Minimum Wages Legislation

Before I talk about the air travel issue, because this is my only opportunity to meet with the press today, and because I had the unusual good fortune of letting them parade in ahead of us, here -- I actually tried to get Mark Knoller [CBS Radio] to do this announcement, but he refused. [*Laughter*]

I want to say a few words about a very down-to-Earth issue, the proposal to raise the **minimum wage**. I have called for a simple one dollar increase in the **minimum wage** to help millions of families. Last night, dozens of Republicans joined us in forming a majority to raise the **minimum wage** by a dollar over 2 years.

But unfortunately, the leadership turned that commonsense act into a dead letter by insisting they would only have a **minimum wage** increase if we turn back overtime protections for over a million workers and use the bill to give a large tax cut, which both disproportionately benefits the wealthiest Americans and would put our prosperity at risk by making it impossible for us to continue to pay down the debt and to save Social Security and Medicare.

Now, I think the American people question why Congress can't do something as simple as raising the **minimum wage** without loading it up with special favors. And I think it's a good question. The right answer is to send me a clean bill, a bill simple and clear, that could fit on one side of one piece of paper. In fact, if you look at it, that's exactly what our **minimum wage** bill does. It's not very big, not very complicated. And I hope that we can pass it.

I'm looking forward to working with the Congress. I have not given up on this, and I have been given some encouraging signals that we might yet be able to reach an agreement. So I will keep working on it.

Air Travel Delays

Now, let me again welcome all the representatives of the transportation industry here. And let me say a special word of appreciation to Senator Jay Rockefeller for his longstanding leadership in this

area and his interest. I think it's quite important that we have airline efficiency, because it's almost impossible for someone as tall as Senator Rockefeller to be comfortable on an airline -- [Laughter] -- and we want to make sure he can at least always be on time. [Laughter] He has worked on this for a long time.

You mentioned, Secretary Slater mentioned the meeting we had in Everett, Washington. When I took office, the airline industry was in trouble. We've all worked very hard for the successes of the last 7 years, and all the actors in the industry have.

I'd also like to say a special word of appreciation to someone who is not here, Vice President Gore, who headed our Commission on Airline Safety and Security. It was part of our reinventing Government effort, and I thank him for his efforts, and all the people who worked on that endeavor.

We know that delays pile up as flights increase and thunderstorms snarl the skies. We know, with springtime coming, that we don't want to forget, as Rodney said, that last year's summer storms were the worst, or some of the worst, on record. The air traffic control system couldn't respond fast enough. More than 1,200 aircraft were late every day last summer. Delays rose by 22 percent last year overall. It's not good for travelers; it's not good for the airline industry; and it's not good for the overall economy.

Of course, when it comes to air travel, safety is the most important thing. In severe weather, flights will be canceled or delayed for safety reasons, and passengers wouldn't have it any other way. But as we work to keep the travel as safe as it can be, we should also do everything we can to make it as efficient as it can be.

After last summer's record delays, the Federal Aviation Administration put together an extraordinary partnership -- with the airline industry, the pilots, the workers who keep the planes in the air, the air traffic controllers who bring them home safe. Together, they developed a faster, more efficient response to storms. And they came here today to brief me on the improvements we can all expect this summer.

First, better communications will let pilots and passengers know promptly whether they can expect a delay measured in minutes or in hours. Second, centralized air traffic decisionmaking will let us respond better to the really big storms that can stretch the length of the east coast or from Houston to the Great Lakes. Third, new technology will help FAA and airline experts use airspace more efficiently, detect storms sooner, and keep runways working even in bad weather. Fourth, FAA and airline representatives will share information several times a day, working off the same state-of-the-art weather forecast. And finally, next month the FAA will open a web site with up-to-the-minute weather information for consumers.

I want to thank all the organizations represented here for working together. And I thank all the Members of Congress who have supported these reforms. Let me also mention that Congress is close to finalizing the FAA reauthorization bill. I know it's important to Secretary Slater, because he sent me a memo about it yesterday. [Laughter] This will provide ample funding to upgrade facilities and equipment at airports and air traffic control centers. If we want to minimize delays and maximize safety, we need this FAA reauthorization and this funding. I think everybody here who's done a lot of air travel knows that we need to upgrade the facilities and the equipment and the air traffic control centers.

But I am concerned that too little funding will be available for air traffic control operations. That's the bedrock of efficiency and safety. And although the bill contains some first steps forward, it doesn't go far enough toward the system-wide reform we need.

We must bring the air traffic control system and the way it's managed into the 21st century. We have the safest air travel in the world, but as more and more Americans take to the air, we need to make our system as efficient as it safe. The FAA expects passenger traffic to rise by more than 50 percent in the next 10 years. Freight traffic will almost double in the same period. Busier skies means we

have to work harder to keep our skies safe and to keep planes flying on time.

So today I'm directing the FAA to develop a plan for broader reform of the air traffic control system and to report back to me in 45 days, building from fundamental principles. America's 21st century air traffic control system should provide 21st century high-tech service. The system must work better with its customers, the commercial airlines, and others who pay for the system. It must be able to look beyond next year's budget cycle and fund new technology we need over a multi-year period.

We must meet these challenges in a way that helps, not harms, everyone who is a part of the air traffic control system. And we must always keep safety at the top of our agenda. With other Government agencies and the private sector, I ask the FAA to look ahead to our ultimate goal, putting together a seamless, state-of-the-art system from coast to coast.

Now, until we work out a way to get Mother Nature to cooperate, storms, delays, and cancellations will always be with us. And the American people understand that. But they also understand that if we can photograph and analyze weather patterns from space, we ought to be able to tell passengers why they're delayed and for how long. If we can guide the space shuttle into orbit and back, we ought to be able to guide planes around thunderstorms safely.

We can do a better job. Starting next summer, with the help of everyone here today, we will. Again, let me say, Secretary Slater and to Jane Garvey and to all the people standing with me and all of you sitting out in the audience who had anything to do with this, this is the way our country ought to work in a lot of other contexts. I think we have to do more. But this summer a lot of people will benefit from the enormous efforts you have made, and I am very, very grateful.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:21 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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Revised Final 03/09/00 10:30am

Jeff Shesol

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PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON

DEPARTURE STATEMENT

ON MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT

AND THE MINIMUM WAGE

THE WHITE HOUSE

March 9, 2000

REVISED

**PRESCRIPTION DRUGS DEPARTURE STATEMENT
THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 2000**

700 FSR 9-11-00

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS ATTENDING: (9)

Daniel K. Akaka (D-HI) ✓

~~Joseph R. Biden (D-DE)~~

John B. Breaux (D-LA) ✓

Richard H. Bryan (D-NV) ✓

Thomas A. Daschle (D-SD) ✓

Byron L. Dorgan (D-ND) ✓

~~Carl Levin (D-MI)~~

Paul S. Sarbanes (D-MD) ✓

Ron Wyden (D-OR) ✓

Senator Daschle, thank you. To the other Senators who join us here today, thank you as well for your hard work on this important issue.

Before I begin, I want to say a few words about another important issue – the minimum wage – and a vote the House will take today. The Republican leadership has derailed a simple vote on the minimum wage with a maximum of political maneuvering. The vote has yet to be taken, but the results are already in. Special interests will win – the national interest will wait.

Let me be clear: we will raise the minimum wage, but not with this Republican bill that stacks the deck against American workers.

Their bill is loaded up with poison pills that penalize workers and with risky tax cuts that threaten our prosperity and the future of Social Security and Medicare. I will veto this bill. Congress should send me a bill I can sign – a clean, straight-forward bill that raises the minimum wage by one dollar over two years. That's what American workers deserve.

By the end of the day, two things will be clear: when it comes to raising the minimum wage, we have the votes to pass it, but Republican leaders have the power to kill it. But today's vote is not the final word. I will continue to work with the bipartisan majority in Congress that supports a real raise in the minimum wage.

Now, let me say a few words on the issue Senator Daschle just addressed. Today, Senate Democrats have come together to agree on principles for a voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit – something so many seniors need and too few of them have. There have been a lot of proposals on the table, a good number of good ideas. But today, together, we are moving forward on the path to progress. By uniting around these common principles, you're setting standards that any prescription drug plan should meet. That's a significant step. It moves us further toward the day when every older American has the choice of affordable prescription drug coverage.

More than three in five seniors and people with disabilities still lack dependable drug coverage that could lengthen and enrich their lives. Our budget would, at long last, extend them that lifeline. It also creates a reserve fund of \$35 billion to build on this new benefit, to protect those who carry the heavy burden of catastrophic drug costs.

Most important, our prescription drug plan embodies the essential principles that Senator Daschle described. I believe that any plan passed by the Congress must be optional, affordable, and accessible to all beneficiaries; it must use price competition, not price controls; it must boost seniors' bargaining power to get the best prices possible; and it should be part of an overall plan to strengthen and modernize Medicare.

We owe it to our people to pass this prescription drug plan. We owe it to our seniors – all of them, not just some of them – to create this new choice and to do it this year. We shouldn't be satisfied with half-measures.

Keep in mind that a tax deduction would help only the wealthiest seniors; and a block grant, which some in the majority have proposed, would help only the very poorest.

Neither alternative would do anything for seniors with modest, middle-class incomes between \$15,000 and \$50,000. That's nearly half of all seniors; most of whom lack dependable drug coverage as well. It would be wrong, I think, to deny them that choice.

There is no better time to get this done. Our economy is strong; our people are infused with a sense of purpose. Our balanced budget gives us a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity – not only to pay down the debt, but to lengthen the life of Social Security and Medicare, and to modernize Medicare with a long-overdue, voluntary prescription drug benefit. Today, Senate Democrats have taken a big step toward that goal; and, if we keep working together, I believe we will reach it. Thank you.

Draft 03/08/00 3:00pm
Jeff Shesol

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
DEPARTURE STATEMENT
ON MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT
THE WHITE HOUSE
March 9, 2000**

00 MAR 8 PM 11:15

Senator Daschle, thank you. Senators TBD, thank you for your hard work and for being here today.

It's very encouraging to me to see Senate Democrats coming together, agreeing on principles for a voluntary prescription drug benefit – something so many seniors need and too few of them have. We've had a good number of good ideas and proposals; but these principles unite us and will move us ahead. Working together, we can keep building momentum – until every older American, at long last, has the choice of affordable prescription drug coverage.

More than three in five Medicare recipients still lack dependable drug coverage that could lengthen and enrich their lives. Our budget would extend them that lifeline. It creates a reserve fund of \$35 billion to build on this new benefit, to protect those who carry the heavy burden of catastrophic drug costs.

Most important, our prescription drug plan embodies the essential principles that Senator Daschle described. Any benefit must be optional, affordable and accessible; it must use price competition, not price controls; it must boost seniors' bargaining power to get the best prices possible; and must be part of an overall plan to strengthen and modernize Medicare.

We owe it to our people to pass this prescription drug plan. We owe it to our seniors – all of them, not just some of them – to create this new choice and to do it this year. Keep in mind that a tax credit would help only the wealthiest seniors; and a block grant, which some in the majority have proposed, would help only the very poorest. Neither would do anything for seniors with modest, middle incomes between \$15,000 and \$50,000. That's nearly half of all seniors; and most of them lack dependable drug coverage as well. It would be wrong, I believe, to deny them that choice.

There is no better time to get this done. Our economy is strong; our people are infused with a sense of purpose. Our balanced budget gives us a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity – not only to pay down the debt, but to lengthen the life of Social Security and Medicare, and to modernize Medicare with a long-overdue, voluntary prescription drug benefit. Today, we take a significant step toward that goal; and if we keep working together, I believe we will reach it. Thank you.

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

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Subject: _____

Departure Statement on Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit

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PODESTA	☒	☐	LEWIS	☐	☐
ECHAVESTE	☒	☐	MARSHALL	☐	☐
RICCHETTI	☒	☐	MOORE	☐	☐
LEW	☒	☐	N.		
BAILY	☐	☐	N.		
BERGER	☐	☐	RI		
BLUMENTHAL	☐	☐	SI		
BRAIN	☒	☐	S.		
BURSON	☐	☐	TI		
CAHILL	☐	☐	UI		
EDMONDS	☒	☐	VERVEER	☐	☐
FRAMPTON	☐	☐	<u>C. Jennings</u>	☒	☐
IBARRA	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐
JOHNSON, B.	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐
JOHNSON, J.	☒	☐	_____	☐	☐
LANE	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐

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Public Papers of the Presidents

March 8, 2000**CITE:** 36 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 485**LENGTH:** 1430 words**HEADLINE:** Remarks on **Minimum Wage** Legislation**BODY:**

The President. Wasn't she great? I don't think the rest of us need to say much. [Laughter] I want to thank Senator Kennedy and Congressman Gephardt, Congressman Bonior, and all the Members of the House who are here with us today. I want to thank the members of the administration who are here, in addition to Mr. Podesta: Treasury Secretary Larry Summers, Gene Sperling, Deputy Labor Secretary Ed Montgomery. I thank the religious leaders who are here, including Reverend Paul Sherry, the former president of the United Church of Christ; the Reverend David Beckmann, the president of Bread for the World; and the other community leaders.

But most important of all, I want to thank Cheryl Costas for being here, because we're here today on behalf of her and so many people like her all across our country. People who work for the minimum wage often don't get a chance to see the White House. They don't have time to come, even for the public tours. They work hard every day. They stock our store shelves, wash dishes at our restaurants, clean our offices at night, care for our kids during the day. They're in every town and every city in our country. They're of every racial and ethnic and religious group. They have in common the minimum wage. And they need a raise, and as you saw, they deserve a raise.

We are here today to ask Congress to give it to them. Ever since I ran for President in 1992, I've had a vision of making our Nation a place where everyone -- everyone -- responsible enough to work for it could have a share of the American dream. Over the last 7 years, with the help of a lot of you here today, we've made a lot of headway toward that goal, turning the economy around and continuing the longest economic expansion in our history. I want to continue doing that.

I want us not to squander the surplus but to save Social Security and Medicare, to invest in education, and to pay our debt down. I also have tried very hard not just to generate jobs but to help people who are working hard for less. That's why we expanded the earned-income tax credit, and I've asked Congress to expand it again. That's why we passed the family and medical leave law, and I've asked Congress to expand it again. And that's why, with bipartisan support in 1996, we raised the minimum wage to \$ 5.15 an hour, over 2 years. And now it's time to do it again, to \$ 6.15 an hour.

We have bipartisan support again in Congress, but once again, the Republican leadership is trying to stop us. They know they can't win on the facts. Back in 1996 -- listen to what was said the last time we tried to raise the minimum wage. In 1996, Republican leaders said that a higher minimum wage, and I quote, "was a job killer cloaked in kindness." They warned that it would throw young minorities out of work and lead to -- listen to this -- a juvenile crime wave of epic proportions.

Time has not been kind to their predictions. [Laughter] Today I release a report from the National Economic Council that puts to rest any of the lingering myths about the minimum wage. Since the minimum wage was raised in 1996, our economy has created over 10 million new jobs. The unemployment rate is at its lowest point in 30 years. The employment of minority youth has gone up. Juvenile crime has gone down. We now have the lowest poverty rates in 20 years and the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rates ever recorded. We've cut the welfare rolls in half. And, thanks in part to the minimum wage increase, millions have moved from welfare to work and incomes for even the poorest Americans are rising for the first time in decades.

Now, that's what happened the last time we raised the minimum wage. There are no facts on which to base this opposition anymore. The new report I release today also dispels another myth about the minimum wage, that those who benefit are mostly middle class teenagers working for gas money. Cheryl probably feels a lot like me -- I wish I were still a middle class teenager working for gas money. [Laughter]

But the fact is that 70 percent of the people on the minimum wage are adults; 60 percent are women; and almost half work full-time. Many are the sole breadwinners, struggling to raise their children on \$ 10,700 a year. And I think Congress ought to think about them when this vote comes up.

Today, there are more than 10 million Americans like Cheryl working for \$ 5.15 an hour. You heard her say it's hard to live on that, especially if you have children. But no Americans who works full time should raise their children in poverty. This modest increase would simply restore the minimum wage to what it was in real dollar terms in 1982. People who are against this should have to confront that fact.

For a full-time worker, however, this would mean another \$ 2,000 a year. And if you're on the minimum wage, that's real money, enough money for a family of four to buy groceries for 7 months or pay rent for 5 months.

This is the right thing to do for working families, the right thing to do for our economy, at a time when we've got labor shortages that will draw more people back into the labor market. Studies from Princeton to my own Council of Economic Advisers show that's exactly what happens when you raise the minimum wage: Increase the reward for work, and people who weren't looking for jobs decide to look and go to work.

There are a dozen good reasons to raise the minimum wage and not a single good argument against it. Even the Republican leadership understands that. So instead of arguing the facts, they're playing legislative sleight of hand. For example, they're now using the minimum wage as a vehicle to repeal worker protections and pass irresponsible tax cuts that would threaten our fiscal discipline and jeopardize our ability to save Social Security and Medicare and pay the debt down by 2013.

They also say they want to put this in over 3 years, not 2. That would mean \$ 900 less in wages for a full-time minimum wage worker. If Republican leaders send me a bill that makes workers wait for another year for their full pay raise and holds the minimum wage hostage for risky tax cuts that threaten our prosperity, I'll veto it.

It is time to stop nickel-and-diming the American working people out of the money that they need and deserve. This is just wrong. This is wrong. We have destroyed every single argument against raising the minimum wage. They're gone. All you've got now is legislative game playing; and it's wrong.

I want a clean, straightforward bill to raise the minimum wage by a dollar over 2 years, and I intend to sign it.

Let me say to all of you, I am profoundly grateful for the prosperity our Nation enjoys today, grateful

for the opportunity that our administration has had to play a role in it. But I will never be satisfied as long as there are people like Cheryl out there. I mean, what else can you ask this woman to do? She's kept her family together. Her husband has a disability. She's supporting four kids. She's going to school full time. Now, how can Congress justify saying no to her?

That's what I want to know. Let's play games on another bill. They're going to pass a lot of other bills. Can't we put the working people of this country first for a change here and put political games second?

I'd like to now introduce to speak the first of a series of Members of Congress, without whom this fight could never be waged. And I am profoundly grateful to Representative David Bonior for nearly 25 years of fighting for people like Cheryl Costas.

Congressman Bonior.

[At this point, Members of Congress made brief remarks.]

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, all that needs to be said has been said. But what needs to be done has not been done. So I ask you to leave here remembering the stirring words of our leaders in Congress and the profoundly moving story of Cheryl Costas. And just remember, there's a lot more people like her out there. Remember what Dick Gephardt told you: Just ask every Member of Congress to imagine how long they could live on the minimum wage.

This is the right thing to do. We're still here after over 220 years because when the chips are down, we mostly do the right thing, in spite of ourselves. Ask them to do the right thing.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:31 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Cheryl Costas, minimum wage earner, who introduced the President.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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Public Papers of the Presidents

March 7, 2000

CITE: 36 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 483**LENGTH:** 390 words**HEADLINE:** Letter to Congressional Leaders on **Minimum Wage** Legislation**BODY:**

Dear --:

I am writing this letter to strongly encourage Congress to pass clean, straightforward legislation to raise the **minimum wage** by \$ 1 -- from \$ 5.15 to \$ 6.15 -- in two equal steps. Working families across this country deserve an increase that simply restores the real value of the **minimum wage** to what it was in 1982.

Those who argue this modest pay raise would harm the economy could not be more wrong. Since 1996, when I worked with Congress to raise the **minimum wage** by 90 cents over 2 years, the unemployment rate has fallen from 5.2 percent to 4.1 percent -- near the lowest level in 30 years, more than 10 million new jobs have been created, and economic growth has averaged 4.3 percent.

Despite this overwhelming evidence, some in Congress are insisting on a lengthier 3-year increase in the **minimum wage** -- a delay that would cost a full-time, year-round worker more than \$ 900 over 2 years. Others have chosen to use the **minimum wage** increase as a vehicle to repeal important overtime protections for American workers. And finally, some are using this **minimum wage** increase to pass irresponsible tax cuts that would threaten our fiscal discipline and jeopardize our ability to extend the life of Medicare and Social Security and pay down the debt by 2013.

Let me be clear -- this is the wrong approach. I will veto any legislation that holds this **minimum wage** increase hostage to provisions that delay this overdue pay raise or jeopardize our ability to strengthen Social Security and Medicare and pay down the debt by 2013 for future generations.

All Americans should be able to share in our current economic prosperity. For a full-time worker at the **minimum wage**, this increase would provide a \$ 2,000 annual raise -- enough for family of four to buy groceries for 7 months or pay rent for 5 months. More than 10 million workers would benefit from this proposal, the majority of them women. Congress should do the right thing and give these workers a raise.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; and Thomas A.

Draft 9/24/99 3:20 p.m.
Sam Afridi

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON

RADIO ADDRESS ON THE MINIMUM WAGE

September 24, 1999

Those of us in public service ought to do the same thing. Again, I say to Congress: Schedule the votes, send me the bills, I'll sign them. And together, we'll move America down the path of progress and make a real difference in families' lives.

Thanks for listening.

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Public Papers of the Presidents

September 6, 1999**CITE:** 35 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 1699**LENGTH:** 1145 words**HEADLINE:** Remarks at a Labor Day Picnic in Newport News, Virginia**BODY:**

Thank you very much. Let me just begin by saying how grateful I am for the wonderful reception you have given me. You know, I can't tell you how much I appreciate the kindness and friendship that you have given to me and my family, my Vice President and his family, and our administration, through two Presidential elections and 6 1/2 years of our 8-year term. I thank you.

I want to thank Congressman Sisisky and Delegate Crittenden here, who gave a pretty good reason for keeping Senator Robb in office, and I hope you'll listen to her.

I want you to know what we were doing before we came here. We were actually working on a school, to highlight one of the things I'm trying to get this Congress to do, which is to pass a bill that would help us to build or modernize 6,000 new schools so our kids, whether they're rich or poor, will have world-class places to go to school in.

So I want to thank the Secretary of Education, the national head of the AFL-CIO, John Sweeney and Secretary Riley, and the leaders of our two great teachers' organizations, the NEA and the AFT, Bob Chase and Sandy Feldman. They're all over here with me. Give them a hand. [Applause]

Now, you know, somebody asked me the day before yesterday why I was coming down here. They said, "You're not running for anything anymore; you can't." And I said, "Well, yes, but I haven't lost my memory, and those people gave me two great terms as President. I wanted to go down and thank them."

And these two guys are -- I want you to take care of Bobby Scott. He is a great resource for you and for the country. And I want you -- you know, every time Senator Robb runs, he has a challenging race. You know why? Because he sticks up for you, that's why. Because he makes the hard decisions for the long run, because he was one of those guys who stood up in 1993. We didn't have a vote to spare. If he had changed his vote, I would have lost that economic plan that's given us 19.4 million jobs and the biggest surplus in history. And they tried to beat him 2 years later because he stood up for you. Because he believes we all ought to go forward together. And I've known him for nearly 20 years now, and he's always standing up. So next time the election comes around, I want you to stand up for him. Will you do it? [Applause]

Now, let me say this. This is Labor Day, so I want to make some remarks about labor. There are a lot of big issues in this country today, but when I got elected President, it was after 12 years of people in the other party running the White House saying they were pro-business and good for the

economy, and we had the worst recession since the Great Depression and the biggest deficit in history, and we quadrupled the debt in 12 years.

I said I'm pro-business, but I'm pro-labor, too. I don't think you can help the economy if you hurt the working people. Guess what? We beat off all their efforts to weaken unions. We beat back all their efforts to hurt the fundamental interests of working people. We passed the Family and Medical Leave Act. We raised the **minimum wage** once. We helped people with child care who were working more, and we got 19.4 million jobs, record numbers of new small businesses every year, the lowest minority unemployment rate ever recorded. It works. If you take care of ordinary people, it works.

So on this Labor Day, as we go back to work, I'd like to just mention some things that relate to you. Number one, we ought to raise the **minimum wage** again. Number two, we ought to do a better job of enforcing the law that says there should be equal pay for equal work between men and women. Number three, we ought to do more to help workers with children at home, working full-time, succeed by helping them with their child care expenses more. Number four, we ought to give investors, people with money, the same tax incentives to invest in poor neighborhoods in America we give them to invest overseas in poor neighborhoods, because we all know that not every neighborhood has been fully benefited by this economic expansion. I've been out there across the country, in the cities, in the small towns, in the rural areas, on the Indian reservations, up and down the Mississippi River. You know as well as I do that in every part of America, there are still people in places who would work or work harder and better if they had a chance to do so, and I am determined to see that we don't stop this until everybody's involved. Number four, we ought -- before we have this big tax cut the Republicans have proposed -- we ought to take care of the big challenges facing America. We ought to make sure Social Security and Medicare are going to be all right when all the baby boomers retire. We've got the largest number of children in our schools in history, and they're more diverse than ever before. We ought to make sure they've got a world-class education before we give the money away. And I think that we ought to get this country out of debt for the first time since 1835, before we give the money away.

Now, let me tell you why that ought to matter to you. Because if the Government is not borrowing money, that means that you're not in competition with the Government; that means you can borrow cheaper; that means home mortgages are lower; that means car payments are lower; that means credit card payments are lower; that means college loan payments are lower; that means more businesses, more jobs, a stronger economy for the future. That's why I want to get America out of debt, because it's good for little people.

You know, I'll be retired pretty soon; debt will be good for me. I've got a good pension; I can buy those Government bonds all day long. I can make money out of debt. You'll make money if we get out of debt and your interest rates are lower and the economy grows more. And I want these children to have a good economy to grow up into. So you just remember this. Nothing that has happened in this country in the last 6 1/2 years that I have achieved as President could have been possible without others, beginning with the people that work with me, starting with the Vice President, going to the people in Congress like Senator Robb and Bobby Scott and Norm Sisisky; and going all the way down to the grassroots in America, the people like you that voted for us.

So, on this Labor Day, as you leave here, if somebody asks you, what did the President say, tell them he said, "We had an idea and it worked. That helping ordinary people works, and it requires people like you to be good citizens and keep people like them in office. And if you do, it will keep right on working."

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:10 p.m., at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to State Delegate Flora Davis Crittenden.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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Public Papers of the Presidents

November 9, 1999

CITE: 35 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 2310**LENGTH:** 98 words**HEADLINE:** Statement on **Minimum Wage** Legislation**BODY:**

The Senate Republican leadership made a serious mistake by insisting on using a minimum wage increase as a cynical tool to advance special interest tax breaks that aren't paid for and do little to help working families. I cannot let this bill become law in its current form. I once again call on Congress to give working American families the pay raise they deserve. Congress should pass clean legislation that boosts the minimum wage by one dollar over the next 2 years and simply restores the value of the minimum wage to what it was in 1982. American workers deserve no less.

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Public Papers of the Presidents

November 20, 1999**CITE:** 35 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 2411**LENGTH:** 961 words**HEADLINE:** The President's Radio Address**BODY:**

Good morning. I'm speaking to you from Istanbul, Turkey, where we just wrapped up a successful summit meeting of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, one that focused on the global challenges of the new century. At the same time, our administration has also wrapped up our work with Congress on the first budget of the new century.

Today I want to talk to you about what we achieved and highlight a little-known accomplishment that will make a big difference to people with disabilities who want to be part of our Nation's growing economy.

This week's budget agreement is truly a victory for the American people, a victory for children because it invests in world-class education that keeps us on the path to hiring 100,000 quality teachers to reduce class size. It doubles funds for after-school and summer school programs, and it provides help for communities to turn around failing schools or shut them down. It's a victory for families and neighborhoods, because it commits the resources necessary to begin hiring another 50,000 community police officers to keep our crime rate, already at a 25-year low, coming down. It's a victory for future generations, because it protects the environment and preserves more natural areas, and it's a victory for American leadership in the world, because finally, it pays our U.N. dues and maintains our commitments around the globe to peace in the Middle East, to reducing the nuclear threat and chemical weapons threats, to helping relieve the debt of the world's poorest nations.

In short, we have delivered a 21st century budget that prepares for the future and lives up to our values. It also continues to pay down our national debt, because we walked away from that big \$ 792 billion tax cut that the Congress passed and I vetoed. So we got the best of all worlds.

Perhaps nothing better symbolizes just what we were fighting for than the historic progress made in the budget to open new doors of opportunity for Americans with disabilities.

Now, we're enjoying one of the strongest economies in generations. Yet even today 75 percent of Americans with severe disabilities who are ready, willing, and able to work aren't working. One of the biggest reasons is they fear they'll lose their health insurance when they get a job. And there's a good reason for this fear.

Under current law, many people with disabilities are eligible for Medicaid or Medicare coverage. But they can't go to work and keep that coverage. Yet when they do go to work, they can't get private

insurance because of their disability. So there is a tremendous disincentive to work. Let me just give you one example.

I met a man in New Hampshire not long ago who is paralyzed as a result of an accident. He wanted to take a job that paid \$ 28,000 a year, but he would have lost his Medicaid health coverage, which would have led to medical expenses of \$ 40,000 a year. Now, the taxpayers would actually be better off. We're going to pay the medical expenses one way or the other, but if he went to work, he'd become a taxpaying citizen. And, more important, he would have the dignity of work. No citizen should have to choose between going to work and paying medical bills.

I'm very proud this week that Congress, on a bipartisan basis, finally agreed on the historic "Work Incentives Improvement Act." It's bipartisan legislation to allow people with disabilities to keep their health care on the job. They can earn a salary, pay taxes, and be role models by proving what people can do if given a chance to live up to their God-given potential.

This will make a real difference, also, for people with potentially severe disabilities -- those who are facing the early onset of diseases like AIDS, muscular dystrophy, Parkinson's, or diabetes. Right now they may be able to work, but their conditions aren't deemed severe enough to qualify for Medicaid. Yet because they have them, they still can't get private health insurance. In other words, they can't get any health care until they're too sick to work.

In the final hours of negotiations, we were able to further strengthen this legislation by getting \$ 250 million for a demonstration program to allow these Americans to buy into Medicaid, stay on the job, and stay healthier longer. I encourage all the States to take advantage of these new health care options.

Taken together, this initiative is the most significant advancement for people with disabilities since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act almost a decade ago. It is part of our administration's 7-year commitment to tearing down barriers to work and rewarding responsibility. Along with reforming welfare, increasing the **minimum wage**, increasing child care assistance, and doubling the earned-income tax credit, the "Work Incentives Improvement Act" is another milestone on the path to opening work and rewarding responsibility for Americans.

Now, I hope we'll stay on that course and take on America's still-unfinished agenda: commonsense gun safety legislation, a real Patients' Bill of Rights, meaningful hate crimes legislation, saving Social Security, reforming Medicare, adding prescription drug coverage, raising the **minimum wage**.

To Congress I say, we've done a good job for the American people by working together. Let's keep working together, build on our progress, and get the right things done for the American people.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:41 p.m. on November 19 in the Perge Room at the Conrad Hotel in Istanbul, Turkey, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 20. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 19 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

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Public Papers of the Presidents

December 4, 1999**CITE:** 35 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 2517**LENGTH:** 808 words**HEADLINE:** The President's Radio Address**BODY:**

Good morning. Yesterday we crossed a historic threshold with the creation of more than 20 million new jobs since January 1993. This is a great American achievement and further proof of the health of our economy, which now has given us the longest peace-time expansion in our Nation's history. Today I want to talk about a group of new workers who, just a few short years ago, were virtually locked out of our growing economy and their chance at the American dream -- the more than one million Americans who are now moving from welfare to work every year.

Seven years ago I asked the American people to join me in ending welfare as we know it. In 1996, with bipartisan support, we passed a landmark welfare reform bill. Today I am pleased to announce that we've cut the rolls by more than half. Fewer Americans are on welfare today than at any time since 1969, 30 years ago. We're moving more than a million people a year from the welfare rolls to the payrolls, 1.3 million in 1998 alone. And most of the people who get jobs are keeping them. They're getting raises and paying taxes and teaching their children to honor the dignity of work.

We've changed the culture of welfare from one that fostered dependence to one that honors and rewards work. That's why I fought to create high performance bonuses for States that do the most for parents entering the work force. I am pleased to announce the first of those awards today.

Twenty-seven States will share \$ 200 million in bonuses for four categories: how many people they've placed in jobs; how well those people did at keeping their jobs and improving their wages; the biggest improvement in job placement; and the biggest improvement in on-the-job success. The States ranked highest were Indiana, Minnesota, Washington, and Florida. I congratulate these States for their achievement. If every State had performed as well as Indiana in placing workers in jobs, we would have helped more than twice as many people go to work last year. I challenge every State to invest its welfare reform resources in helping people to succeed at work.

This is not just about numbers. It's about real people. People like Wendy Waxler of Washington, DC. Wendy wanted a job, but needed time to care for her daughter, who has cerebral palsy. She couldn't afford to lose the Medicaid that paid the doctor's bills. Through welfare to work, Wendy found a flexible job and kept Medicaid and food stamps, at first. Now she and her daughter have health insurance, and Wendy has new confidence and new dreams.

People like Wendy Waxler are an asset our economy simply cannot afford to waste. So we must do more to support working families and people who are trying to turn their lives around. That's why I've asked Congress to raise the **minimum wage**, so that a full-time job is a real ticket out of

poverty; it's why we won new resources and will fight for more, for our new markets initiative, to make it easier for businesses and banks to invest in America's poorest communities; and why I'm asking Congress to increase our commitment to quality child care.

All of us have a moral responsibility to do everything we can to ensure that every eligible family receives health care and nutritional assistance, so all our children can grow up healthy. I fought hard to ensure that the welfare reform law guaranteed these critical supports. Now our administration is taking steps to hold States accountable and make sure families get the benefits they need. Today I am also announcing new performance bonuses like the ones I just awarded for States that do the best at enrolling eligible families in Medicaid and food stamps.

Finally, the old welfare system actually weakened families, by discouraging couples from marrying or living with their children. We want to change that, so starting next year there will also be bonuses for States that do the most to get poor children into two-parent homes, where we know they have the best chance of breaking the cycle of poverty.

Supporting hard-pressed working families and helping people to make the transition from welfare to work isn't just the right thing to do; it's also the smart thing. It encourages millions of people to take responsibility for their families, their future. In so doing, it expands opportunity and strengthens our economy and builds a healthier future for all of us.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:15 p.m. on December 3 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 4. In his remarks, the President referred to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Public Law No. 104 -- 193. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 3 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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Public Papers of the Presidents

December 4, 1998

CITE: 34 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 2423**LENGTH:** 1319 words**HEADLINE:** Remarks on the Earned-Income Tax Credit**BODY:**

Amy's children are over there. And we also have Bernadette Hockaday and her children, and Rhonda Clarke and her children here. They're all here, and we thank them all for coming because they all have benefitted from the earned-income tax credit.

I'd like to thank Gene Sperling, who believed passionately in this when I first met him, well over 6 years ago now; Janet Yellen, the Council of Economic Advisers; Secretary Herman, who was here in the White House helping us to implement the earned-income tax credit in '93. I thank Congressman John Lewis and Congressman Bob Matsui, who are here, who have been passionate advocates; and all the other advocates in the room here -- Bob Greenstein, Justin Dart, the others who are here -- we thank you for your support.

One of the main reasons that I ran for President in 1992 was that I believed that people like Amy could achieve real success if we could unstack the deck against them. I knew that when our Nation was taxing working families into poverty, that was wrong. I knew that when a mother rises at dawn, putting in an honest day's work and still can't afford to buy the children's clothes, that's wrong. And I was determined to try to do something about it.

I also knew that there was a little-known provision in the tax code which had been in for several years called the earned-income tax credit that had the potential if it were actually expanded at an appropriate level to lift all working families out of poverty. And that's how all this started.

Again, let me say, I'm very grateful for everybody who has supported this. I think the important -- one important thing I'd like to point out is that we have representatives here from the AFL-CIO, from AFSCME, from other unions, most of whose members do not get the earned-income tax credit, and they lobbied for it, too, because they thought it was right. And so, for all of you, I just say I'm very grateful.

What we tried to do in 1993 was two things. First of all, we had to get the economy moving again, and secondly, we had to focus on the special needs of people who were working hard at lower wage levels. But first things first -- we had to get the whole economy moving again. Middle-class incomes have been stagnant for 20 years, and we could never have given lower-income working people the chance to raise their incomes if it hadn't been for a policy promoting overall economic growth.

Just this morning, we received more good news for America's families on our overall economic policies. Secretary Herman's Department reports that, last month, unemployment fell to 4.4 percent,

while inflation remains low and stable. But for nearly a year and a half, the unemployment rate has remained below 5 percent, for the first time in 28 years. And in November the economy added more than a quarter of a million jobs, which means now America has created about 17.3 million jobs in the last 6 years. That is a very good record of which the American people can be very proud.

But let's go back to the main point. Even with all those new jobs, under the present circumstances, the way the economy works, millions and millions of those people would be working full-time and still be living in poverty. So what I wanted to do in 1993 was to create new incentives to help people climb the economic ladder and reach true independence, to enable people to succeed at work and at home, in raising their children.

So we got the dramatic increase in the earned-income tax credit into the budget in 1993. And 2 years ago we fought for and won a substantial increase in the **minimum wage**, which I still believe we ought to increase again. Unemployment and inflation are low, and it still has not recovered its levels of 20 or 25 years ago, in real-dollar terms.

Today we release a report prepared by the Council of Economic Advisers. It shows that the earned-income tax credit, as a family tax cut, has been a major factor in encouraging work among single mothers, which you heard Amy talk about. It has also been responsible for much of our strong progress in reducing child poverty. In fact, the report shows that of the 4.3 million people who have been lifted out of poverty since 1993 by the earned-income tax credit, over half of them -- well over half of them -- have been lifted out because we basically doubled the program in 1993.

And, again, I want to say to Bob Matsui and John Lewis, we had -- it was hard to raise the money to pay for that doubling and there were a lot of people, even in our party, who were afraid to do it -- and with some good reason, as it turned out. But it was the right thing to do, and I hope it is something that all of you will always be proud of.

Now, since 1993, families with two children and one parent working full-time at the **minimum wages**, therefore, have seen their incomes rise by more than \$ 2,700 because of the increase in the **minimum wage** and the earned-income tax credit. This has strengthened families; it strengthened communities. It's helped to restore our compact of mutual responsibility that people who work hard and play by the rules ought to have a chance to be rewarded for it. And, again, it helps us to promote both the values of family and work.

So I feel very, very good about this. And I feel great about the overall economic news this morning. But let me also say to all of you, this is not a time for self-congratulation or a time to rest. We have more to do here at home and more to do to stabilize the global economy, if we expect economic growth to continue.

We all know about the economic troubles in Asia; we all see sectors of America's steel industry being overwhelmed by imports at firesale prices. We have all read the headlines about Boeing's layoffs because of the inability of Asian airlines to pay for planes which they have already ordered. We see other problems in the global economy as well. Now we're working hard to reverse the problems in Asia, to limit their reach, to stabilize the long-term system under which so many Americans and so many hundreds of millions of people around the world have benefitted. But it is a sobering thought to remind us that we have to continue to work on this.

Finally, let me say, we have to continue to work on the conditions of working families here at home. Many people still cannot get affordable child care. The **minimum wage** should still be raised. We still have a great deal to do to stabilize the conditions of working families and to genuinely reward work in this country.

In the last session of Congress we passed an expansion of our empowerment agenda to try to bring more jobs, more incomes, more investments into poor inner-city and rural areas. We still have a great deal to do there.

So as you leave there today, and you think about Amy and these other two fine mothers and these beautiful children who are here, and the millions and millions of people whom they represent all across America, I hope you will always be proud of what you have done. But remember, this economy still is not working for everyone, and it is still living in a very turbulent international environment. So I ask you also to continue to support our efforts to deal with the challenges which still have to be met to keep the growth going, and to make sure that what we do here, so far from the lives of most Americans, actually helps them to make those lives better.

Thank you very much, and God bless you all. Thank you, Congressman Rangel. It's good to see you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:12 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Amy Hillen, a job counselor who introduced the President; working mothers Bernadette Hockaday and Rhonda Clarke; Robert Greenstein, executive director, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities; and Justin Dart, Jr., advocate for the rights of disabled persons.

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Public Papers of the Presidents

October 16, 1998

CITE: 34 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 2062**LENGTH:** 2271 words**HEADLINE:** Remarks on the Budget Agreement**BODY:**

Good morning. Please be seated. I am delighted to be here with the Vice President and Senator Daschle, Congressman Gephardt, Mr. Bowles, who's got a great closing act here -- *[laughter]* -- the terrific representation from Congress and the administration, especially our economic team, and all of you.

Northern Ireland Recipients of Nobel Peace Prize

Before I make some remarks on the budget, I'd like to first say how very pleased I was, personally and as President, that the Nobel Prize Committee has awarded the courage and the people of Northern Ireland by giving the Nobel Peace Prize to John Hume and to David Trimble today. I am very grateful for that.

For 30 years, John Hume has been committed to achieving peace through negotiations, not confrontation and violence. He has been an inspiration to the nationalist community, to all the people of Northern Ireland and, indeed, all around the world. David Trimble, as Unionist leader, took up the challenge of peace with rare courage, negotiating and beginning to implement the Good Friday accord. Both have earned this award.

But I believe there are others, too, who deserve credit for their indispensable roles, beginning with Gerry Adams, the Sinn Fein leader, without whom there would have been no peace. Prime Minister Ahern, Prime Minister Blair, Mo Mowlam, their predecessors, without whom there would have been no peace. Other Irish leaders, like Seamus Mallon, and I would like to say a special word of thanks to Senator George Mitchell for his role in the peace talks. The American people appreciate the recognition the Nobel committee gave our Nation in the citation, and we thank all these people for their continuing work for peace.

Budget Agreement

Yesterday our administration and the Democrats in Congress reached agreement with the Republican leadership on a fiscally responsible balanced budget that seizes this moment of prosperity and wisely invests it in the future. By standing together, we were able to achieve historic victories for the American people.

We fought for and won vital new investments, especially for our children. By hiring 100,000 new teachers, we will reduce class size in the early grades to an average of 18. We will enhance individual

attention, increase student learning and, as we learned yesterday at the school violence conference, find more kids who are in trouble and need help early, and prevent more bad things from happening while more good things happen.

We're also making very important investments in child literacy, college mentoring, after-school programs, and summer jobs, all of them at risk until the people behind me stood firm and united. We fought for and won emergency relief for our hard-pressed farmers and ranchers who are suffering not only from the collapse of world markets but from crop diseases and drought and floods. And we fought for and won an impressive package to deal with this emergency only because the people behind me were willing to sustain my veto of the first bill, and I thank them for that very much.

We fought for and won a substantial increase in funding for our clean water initiative to help restore the 40 percent of our lakes and rivers still too polluted for fishing and swimming. We won substantial increases in funding to head off the threat of global climate change which disrupted weather patterns in America -- have warned us about in the last couple of years. We fought for and won the ability to protect precious lands in America, and we struck down the worst of the anti-environmental provisions the Republicans had put into the budget bill because of the people who are standing behind me.

And we worked and worked and worked for 8 long months until, finally, we were able to persuade the Republican majority to join with us in funding America's responsibility to the International Monetary Fund so that we can protect the American economy and fulfill our responsibility to stabilize the global economy. It is a critically important thing to our future; it could not have happened if the people behind us hadn't stood strong and united for months and months.

Let me say, I am especially proud of the way we fought and won the right to reserve every penny of the surplus until we save Social Security first. Despite the efforts of the majority, particularly in the House of Representatives, to squander the surplus on election-year tax plans, we are still now well positioned to save Social Security. Although we can take justifiable pride in these accomplishments, let's not make any mistakes here. Eight days of progress cannot totally erase 8 months of partisanship.

We all know that in those 8 months of partisanship, too many dreams of too many families were deferred. The Republican majority is now leaving town to campaign, but they're also leaving a lot of America's business unfinished. Partisanship killed the Patients' Bill of Rights. Rest assured, as my first legislative priority, I will ask the next Congress to guarantee your right to see a specialist, to receive the nearest emergency care, to keep your doctor throughout your course of treatment, to keep your medical records private, to have medical decisions made by doctors, not insurance company accountants. That's unfinished business because of partisanship.

Partisanship killed our efforts to help students stuck in crumbled and overcrowded schoolrooms. We fought and fought and fought and won the right for the 100,000 teachers. Now we've got to fight to give the teachers someplace to teach and to give those smaller classes someplace to meet. This is a battle our children cannot afford to lose.

You know, I must say, of all the things that we disagreed with the Republicans on this year, this one mystified me the most. I would have thought they would like this program, not a Government spending program but a targeted tax cut, fully paid for in the balanced budget, that wouldn't take a dime from the surplus, wouldn't add an inch of redtape to the Government's rules, but would build or repair 5,000 schools. We were right to fight for it, and we ought to take it to the American people and ask them to put progress over partisanship.

Republican partisanship killed an increase in the **minimum wage**. You can't really raise a family on \$ 5.15 an hour anymore. If we value work and family, we ought to raise the **minimum wage**. You know, all those arguments against the **minimum wage** were wrong the last time we did it. We kept on growing, and unemployment now and inflation now are lower than they were the last time we raised it. Only partisanship killed it. I hope we can take that to the American people and come back here in January and raise the **minimum wage**.

And partisanship killed our best chance at bipartisan campaign finance reform. We had a handful of Republicans who did agree with us on this, but the majority was able to defeat us. Senator Daschle produced a unanimous vote from the Senate Democratic caucus -- absolutely unanimous -- but partisanship defeated us. It said yes to soft money, yes to the status quo, no to reform. The next Connally reform these outdated campaign finance laws, and people will do it who are here with me.

And finally, let me say that partisanship killed the comprehensive anti-tobacco legislation which would have saved millions of young Americans from painful and premature death. I still can't believe -- I think about it every day -- I still can't believe that the tobacco interests were able to persuade the Congress, with the majority in Congress, to walk away from this. It don't have anything to do with the tobacco farmers; Senator Ford back there took care of that. [Laughter] This was about whether we were going to take appropriate action to save our children, and pure, old-fashioned partisanship killed it. The people behind me will save more of our children's lives when the voters give them a chance to do so next January. We're going to do that.

So let me say again, by way of thanks to all of them and to all of you who worked on this, we can be justifiably proud of the hard work and hard-won gains that this budget represents, of the 100,000 teachers, of the after-school programs, the saving the surplus for Social Security, of protecting the environment and advancing the cause of clean water, and a safer global environment, of keeping our economy going strong. But 8 days of progress cannot replace or make up for 8 months of partisanship, to protect our patients, to modernize our schools, to raise the **minimum wage**, to look out for the 21st century and reform Social Security and Medicare in the right way. We need a Congress that will put people before politics, progress ahead of partisanship.

I will always remember these last 8 days. I will always remember what our caucus, united, was able to achieve. And I will always be grateful to them for what they did for the American people. Thank you very much.

Now, I want to introduce the Vice President and the other leaders. Thank you very much.

[At this point, Vice President Al Gore, Senator Thomas A. Daschle, and Representative Richard A. Gephardt made brief remarks.]

The President. Let me say, as we close, how very grateful I am to all those who have spoken and those who have not spoken, those who are here and those who stood with us who are not here, for giving us a chance to, in the last 8 days, have some very important victories for the American people and, today, for giving us a chance to make it absolutely clear what is at stake in the next 2 years.

When we leave here, I am going to take a brief trip to Chicago to stand with Senator Carol Moseley-Braun. And I think it is worth pointing out today that she is the very first member of our caucus who stood up for the idea that the National Government had an opportunity and an obligation to do something to promote the building and the repair of school facilities for our children's future. I say that to make this point: Every one of us here, standing here, except Mr. Bowles, and he may be about to take the plunge -- [laughter] -- every one of us here is here because of the judgment of the American people. The jobs we hold are not our jobs in any fundamental sense; they belong to the American people.

And in 18 days, after a blizzard of advertisements -- probably 2 or 3 times as much from the Republican side as from ours, maybe even more when you count the third party committees and all that -- they will make a decision. The first decision they'll have to make is whether to go and vote in a midterm election, which always, always seems to have lower turnout than the presidential elections.

If we have accomplished nothing else here today, even when our voices reach those who disagree with us, who think we're making a mistake to put 100,000 teachers in the class-room, who think we're making a mistake to fight for a Patients' Bill of Rights or a rise in the **minimum wage** or

better school facilities, if we have done nothing else, I hope we have reminded the American people that, in the end, every one of us gets to raise our voice, to cast our vote, to wield our sign-or-veto pen because of their judgments. And in 18 days, that will be given a chance to render another judgment.

Between now and then, they will have to sort their way through all the conflicting claims and the blizzard of advertisement. But I think that, in the end, many will agree that it is worth going to vote to ratify those who fought for 100,000 teachers and a clean environment and a strong American economy and an America playing a responsible role in the world economy. And perhaps most important of all, people who voted to save the surplus until we save Social Security and honor the compact with generations and keep our country strong when the baby boomers retire.

In 18 days they'll have a chance not only to support those people but to say, "With my vote, I choose to go back and build world-class school facilities. I choose to say, 'yes, we're going to have managed care, but even people in managed care deserve the right to have medical decisions made by medical doctors, not accountants,' to choose to give people the **minimum wage**, to choose to save Social Security in the right way, to choose these things."

That's the message. I hope the American people know that the people standing behind me earned their pay the last 8 or 9 days. They were worth every penny of tax dollars they got. And they did it the last 8 months because they fought and waited and stood in storm after storm until the time came when they could stand up and do something right for America. And in 18 days I hope the voters of this country, the citizens, will exercise their power to say, "This is the path I choose." Staying home is not a very good option when so much is riding on a trip to the ballot box.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:36 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to John Hume, leader, Social Democratic and Labor Party, and David Trimble, First Minister, Northern Ireland Assembly, Nobel Peace Prize Laureates; Sinn Fein leader and Northern Ireland Assembly member Gerry Adams; Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; Prime Minister Tony Blair and Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Marjorie Mowlam of the United Kingdom; Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon of the Northern Ireland Assembly; and former Senator George J. Mitchell, who chaired the multiparty peace talks in Northern Ireland.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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Public Papers of the Presidents

July 28, 1997

CITE: 33 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 1144**LENGTH:** 6315 words**HEADLINE:** Remarks to the National Governors' Association Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada**BODY:**

Thank you very much for the warm welcome. I must say, whenever I come back here, I feel terribly nostalgic. I'm eager to come, I hate to leave, and I always know there's something that we don't entirely agree on. And right before we came in here, I came into the Mirage and I saw Steve Wynn and Governor Miller, and right before we walked in, we walked through another room which is set up just like this one -- a committee room. There wasn't soul in there. And I thought, look, I know we don't agree on everything, but this is taking it a little far. *[Laughter]* I was delighted to see the real thing. Thank you very much.

I want to say that -- to you, Governor Miller and to Sandy and all your team here in Nevada, Hillary and I are very grateful to you for many things, but especially for what you've done on early childhood development. I congratulate Governor Voinovich on assuming the chairmanship. And I thank him for what he has done for young children. It is a remarkable record in Ohio. And Governor Carper, congratulations. I'm delighted to be joined here by many members of the administration who have been here before and will be here when I leave.

And I would like to talk today about a number of things, but let me say that I have tried to establish a better and a growing partnership with the NGA since I first took office. I've been working on one thing, really, which is to prepare our country to go into this new century where every American who is responsible enough to work for it has a chance at the American dream; where out of our vast diversity we build one America; and where we will continue to be the world's leading force for peace and freedom and prosperity, with opportunity for all and responsibility from all, an American community of all.

The Governors who have been kind enough to share with me work experiences, now going back nearly 20 years, have played a major role in a lot of what I have tried to do, because it seems to me now, as it seemed to me when I took office -- although I feel more strongly about it now -- that in some ways our major challenge is to develop new ways of thinking and acting about all of our problems, going beyond false choices which are imposed on us by limited thinking and beyond old conflicts. It's so much easier to keep fighting in the same old way than it is to imagine a new way of doing business. Indeed, a great deal of my time away from domestic issues is spent trying to get people to stop doing things that no one should have to ask them to stop doing. In Bosnia people lived together for decades in peace; within 2 months they were shooting at each other's children. In Ireland they're still fighting over 600-year-old disputes when the young people are dying to get away from it. But people just can't escape the habits of old conflicts. Thank goodness ours are more constrained, but we have to do better.

There was a lot of debate about the time I signed the bill about whether welfare reform would work, about whether people would actually move from welfare to work or whether they could. I would submit to you that after 41/2 years that debate should be over, based on the evidence that you have worked so hard to amass. There are now 3 million fewer people on welfare than the day I took office and 1.2 million fewer people since I signed the welfare reform bill just a year ago. Nine States have cut their welfare rolls by more than 40 percent in the last 4 years. Wisconsin and Wyoming have cut their welfare rolls in half. This is the largest decrease in history. And we now have the lowest percentage of our population on welfare since 1970. And you should be very proud of your role in that achievement. That is something America can be proud of, the lowest percentage of people on public assistance since 1970.

Now, I know there are a lot of reasons for that. The good economy has taken some people from welfare to work. There's been a 50 percent increase in child support collections, and that's helped. The **minimum wage** and the earned-income tax credit have made work more attractive for people on the margins; that's helped. But make no mistake about it -- our Council of Economic Advisers did a very rigorous analysis of this, making clear that a significant percentage of the people who had moved from welfare to work did so because of State welfare reform initiatives and because of the new law. So we know it can work.

Now, let me also say I know that a lot of you were concerned, as I was, about some of the things that were in the welfare reform law that I felt should not have been there, and we are moving forward in this budget agreement to fix that. Among other things, the most egregious cuts in aid to legal immigrants will be restored under agreements we have already reached with the Republican and the Democratic leaders in the Congress. And there will be another \$ 1 1/2 billion for food stamps, which I think is important, among other things, because it's important for us to remember that most people on welfare are single mothers and their little children. But a lot of unemployed people long term in this society are single men, and we should not forget about them. And one of the things that I like so much about what Governor Carnahan has been doing in Missouri is the attempt to integrate the efforts to put single men into the work force with the effort to put people from welfare into the work force. If we can't do this now when our unemployment is 5 percent nationwide and when prosperity is virtually uniform across the country but there are pockets of people who are still unemployed, when can we do it?

So I believe that these restorations will help you in your efforts. And State officials were central to this budget debate without regard to party, and I thank you for your help in getting that into the agreement.

But there's also a lot more to be done. You asked to be cut loose from the Federal Government's bureaucratic strings, and we did that. But now you have continuing responsibility that is greater, and we have continuing responsibility because it's still a national priority. So I think we ought to take a look at how we're doing -- our successes, our shortcomings, and our continuing challenges -- in four areas: jobs, child care, transportation, and child support.

First, how well are we doing in creating the jobs that are necessary to move people from welfare to work? If we require people to work, they have to be able to work; there have to be jobs there for them. Nearly all the State welfare-to-work programs include the traditional elements of job search, training, education, community work experience, placement in unsubsidized jobs. But now -- I think this is remarkable -- now 36 of the 50 States are doing what I would encourage every State to do, using welfare checks to subsidize private employment for a period of time.

Almost every State in America today has more money under the welfare program of the reform law than you would have if the old law was in place, because we pegged the block grant to the time when welfare rolls were the highest, and they've dropped at a record rate. So the 36 States that are doing this I predict will find much, much greater success in getting private employers to be willing to take a chance, because now that we've moved 3 million people off the rolls, you know as well as I do that the remaining adults on the rolls, by and large, are the hardest to place in employment in the

private sector, need the most training, need the most support, may have a false start or two, and we cannot do it unless we have private sector support. So for those of you who have done this, I take my hat off to you.

We also know that there will be some places in this country where the impact of welfare is so great and the present absence of private sector, successful job creation is limited that we have to do more. So this agreement will include \$ 3 billion to go to communities and States to help you create the work opportunities in those areas where the private sector will not be able to provide them alone. And I think that is a good thing.

We also have secured in this agreement from congressional leaders a private employers tax credit to help hire long-term welfare recipients. And I believe it is drawn as narrowly as we could draw it so that the tax credit cannot, in effect, be used for people other than those who are actually moving from welfare to work. And I hope that will help you to meet your goals in each State. Pennsylvania and Massachusetts are among the States that are already doing this.

And I also believe, if I might say, that every one of these workers should earn the **minimum wage**. And I know there's been some debate about that. I've heard already from Governor Voinovich and Governor Miller what your position is, but I just want to reaffirm my view that when people go into the workplace and they earn the **minimum wage** -- they ought to be able to earn the **minimum wage**. They should be eligible for the earned-income tax credit. That's what I believe. Whether we can work some resolution of some of the other issues, I don't know, but I feel very strongly about that. I know right now that according to our analysis, the fact that we raised the **minimum wage** and raised the earned-income tax credit is one of the reasons a lot of people voluntarily tried to move from welfare to work, and I don't think we ought to do anything that would undermine that incentive.

Let me say that we also have a welfare-to-work partnership nationally with CEO's of large, medium, and small businesses. And I want to thank Governors Thompson and Carper for agreeing to cochair the advisory council of that partnership. I think it would be a good thing if every State had a similar partnership. North Carolina, I know, is one of the States -- a growing list -- that have established them locally.

My experience has been that private employers are actually quite eager to help us solve this problem. If we will help them with some of their problems, I think that they will carry a lot of this load for us because all of America has a vested interest in seeing that welfare is a second chance, not a way of life. MGM Grand Hotel here has hired over 1,000 welfare recipients during the past few years. And the State of Nevada has set a goal for new casinos to set aside 10 percent of all their positions for former welfare recipients. And we thank you for that.

The second thing that it seems to me that we ought to look at is child care. We all know that it's essential if low income families are going to succeed at work and at home. And I think we all agree that raising children will always be our most important job. It's more important than our day job. It is the most important thing any society can do. And we can't have people with young children moving into the work force unless they know that their children are going to be well-cared for and safe and secure in a nourishing environment while they're at work.

Now, we worked hard to add \$ 4 billion to the welfare reform law to increase child care assistance to you. And States are now receiving more Federal dollars, and about half the States over and above that are increasing their spending beyond what is needed to receive these Federal funds. And for those of you that are doing that, I applaud you. And I think the States with the biggest drop in welfare loads would say -- I see Governor Thompson nodding his head -- I believe they would say that has been critical in their endeavors. Florida, Wisconsin, and a few other States have added quite a bit more than required under the Federal law. Some States are creating seamless child care systems which provide subsidies for all workers below a certain income whether they were once on welfare or not. That is a model that I hope one day we'll be able to have everywhere in America.

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Public Papers of the Presidents

July 13, 1996

CITE: 32 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 1241**LENGTH:** 954 words**HEADLINE:** The President's Radio Address**BODY:**

Good morning. As we prepare to meet the demands of the 21st century, I believe our goal must be to offer opportunity to all Americans, to demand responsibility from all Americans, and to come together as a community to strengthen our shared values and to build a better future together. That is how we will meet our challenges.

This past week, those values were at work on Capitol Hill. Democrats and Republicans produced a bipartisan breakthrough for those Americans working hard to make the most of their own lives. On Tuesday, the Senate voted to pass a 90-cent increase in the **minimum wage**.

It's about time. You can't raise a family on \$ 4.25 an hour, and if we don't raise it, the **minimum wage** will fall to a 40-year low this year in terms of what it will buy. So I congratulate the Republican Members of Congress who joined with the Democrats to honor work and family, opportunity and responsibility, by voting to give **minimum wage** workers a raise. They should send me the final legislation quickly, without delay. That will be a victory for both parties and, more important, for all working Americans.

The passage of the **minimum wage** shows what can happen when we're united, when we reach across party lines, when we work together. This can signify a new spirit of cooperation coming from Capitol Hill. If we continue this spirit, we can meet our other challenges as well.

No challenge is more important than replacing our broken welfare system. Throughout my Presidency I've been determined to enact reform that requires welfare recipients to work, provides child care, imposes time limits, strengthens child support enforcement by cracking down on deadbeat parents, requires teen mothers to stay in school as a condition of welfare. When necessary, I've acted without Congress. Our administration has approved 67 separate welfare reform experiments in 40 States to move people from welfare to work. Fully three-quarters of all welfare recipients are living under new rules right now. The New York Times has called it a quiet revolution in welfare. Today, 1.3 million fewer people are on welfare than the day I took office, and child support collections are up 40 percent.

For 3 1/2 years I've worked with Congress to craft legislation that replaces welfare with work. For months, the Republicans insisted that welfare reform be attached to a plan I strongly feel is misguided, to repeal Medicaid's guarantee of quality health care for elderly Americans, poor children, pregnant women, and people with disabilities. I'm determined to make welfare reform the law of the land, but I've also made it clear that I will not allow Medicaid to be destroyed, and I don't care what

bill it's attached to.

This week the Republican leaders in Congress announced that they are ready to work with me to pass a straightforward welfare reform bill that I can sign into law, instead of sending me legislation they know I'll veto. This can be a real breakthrough, a genuine turning point. We are very close to replacing a broken welfare system with one that requires work, offers opportunity, and demands responsibility. If we work hard and work together we should now be able to pass real welfare reform, and do it very soon.

Already bipartisan legislation has been proposed in the Senate by Democrat John Breaux and Republican John Chafee and in the House by Republican Mike Castle and Democrat John Tanner. These are good, strong bills. They would end welfare as we know it. They should be the basis for quick agreement between the parties. And I look forward to having a bipartisan welfare reform bill within the next month.

We should also extend this same spirit to our other pressing challenges as well. We should pass the Kassebaum-Kennedy health insurance reform bill which could benefit 25 million Americans by saying that you don't lose your health insurance when you change jobs or just because someone in your family has been sick. In its strongest form, this bill passed the Senate unanimously. But for months it slowed to a crawl as Republicans insisted on an untested and unlimited proposal for so-called medical savings accounts that have nothing to do with the fundamental purposes of Kennedy-Kassebaum reforms. So I urge them to reject the political games, and let's come to a quick agreement.

We should also reform our illegal immigration laws. I support legislation that builds on our efforts to restore the rule of law to our borders, ensures that American jobs are reserved for legal workers, and boosts deportation of criminal aliens. But some insist on kicking the children of illegal immigrants out of school. Every major law enforcement organization says this could lead to more crime. So let's put aside this punitive measure and reform our illegal immigration laws now.

It's no secret that this is a political year. And there will be plenty of time to discuss our differences in the months to come. But our Nation faces challenges that cannot wait until November, real welfare reform, a **minimum wage** increase, access to health insurance, stronger immigration laws. We can achieve all these things now if we work together.

I look forward to working with Majority Leader Lott, Speaker Gingrich, and the Democratic leaders of Congress to do the people's business in the coming weeks. If we're willing to put our differences aside for the sake of the American people, we can make this a time of genuine achievement for our Nation. It would not only be good for both parties, it would be very good for America.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:52 p.m. on July 12 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 13.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: August 12, 1996

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32 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 1241

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32 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 1217

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Public Papers of the Presidents

July 9, 1996

CITE: 32 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 1217**LENGTH:** 1954 words**HEADLINE:** Remarks on Senate Action on **Minimum Wage** Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters**BODY:**

The President. Good afternoon. This was a very good day for America's working families. Today's vote by the Senate means that 10 million hard-working Americans will get a little bit of help to raise their children and keep their family strong. A 90-cent increase in the minimum wage will honor our most basic values, work and family, opportunity and responsibility. It will help working people without hurting our economy, and it is plainly the right thing to do.

Today the minimum wage is not a living wage. You can't raise a family on \$ 4.25 an hour. This action by the Senate today restores the bipartisan commitment that the minimum wage will keep pace with the cost of living. This action will directly benefit millions of hard-working Americans.

Sixty percent of minimum wage workers are women. More than a third are the sole breadwinners in their household. Over 2 million children live in poor or near-poor families where a worker earns the minimum wage. And they will now get a raise.

I'm gratified that a bipartisan majority of the Senators rejected a killer amendment that would have stopped this bill. The provision would have been a powerful incentive for employers to push employees out of their jobs after 6 months. It would have locked millions and millions of Americans into lower wages.

The way has now been cleared for final passage of a minimum wage bill. I call on Congress to send me the final bill quickly. The differences between the House and Senate versions are not significant. An American worker should get their raise as soon as possible. There's no reason that minimum wage workers should have to wait any longer for their raise. This is not a time to nickel and dime our working families. Our economy is sturdy; we have 10 million new jobs; unemployment at 5.3 percent; nearly 4 million new homeowners; rising real hourly wages for the first time in a decade. Now we have to make sure that all Americans have the opportunity to benefit from a growing economy.

This has been a difficult fight. But it turned out to be a real victory for the working families of this country. Today's vote by the Senate will make it possible for more of our people to be rewarded for their hard work, to believe that there is opportunity on the other end of their responsibility.

Again, I thank the Members of the Senate who took this step. I thank the Members of the Congress, both parties, who supported it in both Houses. I look forward to the speedy resolution of the two bills

and to signing it into law.

Let me say one other thing. Today is a special day for me, and since the Vice President's here, I wanted to announce that this is our fourth anniversary. It was 4 years ago today that I asked and he accepted the -- I asked him to become Vice President, or at least the nominee for Vice President, and he accepted it. It has been 4 years of great adventure. It's been a wonderful partnership. And I believe that historians will record that he has been the most effective and influential Vice President in the history of the country. And I just wanted to have this chance to acknowledge 4 great years and to thank him for his remarkable service and his steadily improving sense of humor. [Laughter]

Budget Legislation

Q. How do you feel about a CR that runs through March, sir?

The President. A CR to do what?

Q. [Inaudible] -- at runs through March at fiscal -- [inaudible].

The President. Well, I would hope we could get some of the appropriations bill passed. My understanding is that there are some that we're pretty close to an agreement on. And I would hope that we could keep working into September after we have the August recess to see what else can be done.

There's still a lot of things that need to be done. We need to pass Kennedy-Kassebaum. We need to pass a good welfare reform bill. And I'm still open to any kind of progress we can make on the budget. So I will work with the Congress in any way possible. We have to keep the Government open, and we have to keep the fundamental functions of the country going forward. But I would hope that we wouldn't give up this early on the prospect of progress.

Minimum Wage and Former Senator Dole

Q. Mr. President, former Senator Dole's press secretary says you're playing maximum politics with the minimum wage, yet you were silent for the first 2 years of your administration on the increase of the minimum wage and that he has supported an increase in the minimum wage. Are you playing politics with the minimum wage?

The President. Does that mean that he's changed his position, and he now supports this minimum wage increase?

Q. He says he supports -- as of May 24, 1996, he was in support of the minimum wage, according to the Congressional Record and the press release that they put out.

The President. Well, good for him. That's good.

The Vice President. With or without the poison pill?

The President. I mean, if he is now in support of this bill, I hope he will say so and urge the leadership in the Senate and the House of his party to send me the bill right away. And I think the American people should say that we're glad he supports the bill. If in fact he changed his position in May to support it, I think it's good.

Let me say, I never opposed -- the implication that I, like Senator Dole and the Republican leadership, opposed the minimum wage increase in the first 2 years is simply false. Let's remember, though, we did first things first. The first thing we did was to double the earned-income tax credit, so that we could say over a period of years we were going to take all working families who work 40 hours a week who had children in the home out of poverty. That was a very important thing to do on its own merits. And that took a lot of doing. That took virtually all of 1993. It was an important part

of our economic plan, and it was opposed by all the Members of the other party in the Congress. So we focused on the earned-income tax credit in the first 2 years.

The change of parties in the '94 election had nothing whatever to do with raising the minimum wage. When I ran in 1992. I said I thought we ought to take action to keep the minimum wage up with inflation. And it hadn't been raised in 5 years; it needs to be raised.

1996 Election

Q. Mr. President, on this anniversary it seems only fair to ask you when you plan to officially announce what has clearly been your intention all along here, to seek reelection?

The President. I don't know. [Laughter] I don't know. We haven't made a decision about an official announcement. I can tell you this, that I'm going to try to keep my team together. I hope that we'll -- I'm hoping for an eighth anniversary. How's that?

Small Business and the Minimum Wage

Q. Mr. President, what do you say to small business owners who say they'll have to lay off workers if the minimum wage is increased?

The President. I would say two things. First of all -- first, in 1993, when we made 90 percent of the small businesses in this country eligible for a tax cut by increasing the expensing provisions by 70 percent, and again in this minimum wage bill, there are tax relief provisions for small businesses, a number of them which will actually put more money into the hands of small businesses. So that this -- even the most hard-pressed small businesses should not be adversely affected by this.

Secondly, there have been study after study after study showing -- the vast majority of the studies show that a moderate increase in the minimum wage, especially in a strong economy, does not increase the unemployment rate. We have produced over 10 million new jobs as a country in the last 3 1/2 years. But the people who are still out there working for \$ 4.25 an hour can't live on it. And it is simply a myth to say that most people on the minimum wage are middle class kids living at home with their parents.

I was in Chicago the other day, and some of you probably were with me at that Taste of Chicago event. And I went to one of the food booths, and there was a woman there who said, "I really appreciate you trying to raise the minimum wage. I'm a single mother with two children working full time on the minimum wage and going to school at night. And it's just not true that we're all living in comfortable circumstances. Most people are having a tough time like me."

And that's what I think the answer is. This country has been well-served over a long period of time by having a minimum wage that guaranteed a decent level of subsistence. And remember this, these are people that virtually have to spend everything they make. And when they earn more money, they will turn right around and spend it with small businesses all across the country. They'll spend it at those eating establishments. They'll spend it at the dry cleaners and the places that do laundry. They'll spend it on supporting their children. And therefore, they will be lifting the American economy up, and they'll be helping a lot of small businesses, too.

The Vice President. Could I say something? Could I add a word since in view of the occasion I feel it's okay to interject one word here. I remember when we started this fight. I believe it was the Jim Lehrer show went and asked the question you just asked --

The President. I remember that.

The Vice President. -- to employees who are making the minimum wage. And you know, they're the ones who really ought to give the answer. And I remember vividly one woman in southern Virginia who was making the minimum wage, was asked by the reporter, what about this argument that if

they increase your minimum wage X amount, your employer might reduce the number of jobs in your workplace. She thought just for a minute and looked at him straight in the eye and she said, "I'll take my chances."

And that's the way people who were making the minimum wage feel about this question. And the studies indicate that they're right, especially in today's economy.

Helms-Burton Legislation

Q. Mr. President, do you plan to implement -- [inaudible] -- Helms-Burton legislation that would allow lawsuits to move forward?

The President. Would you say that again, please?

Q. Do you plan to implement title 3 of the Helms-Burton legislation which is due on July 16th to allow those lawsuits to move forward?

The President. I'm sorry, I have not made a determination on that. That has not come to me for a determination yet, so I can't comment.

Let me -- before I leave, I also want to say a special word of thanks to my longtime friend Secretary Belch, who has carried on this fight for the minimum wage and for a minimum wage that would not be crippled by exempting millions and millions of workers from its impact. And so this was an especially sweet day for him as well, and I thank him for his efforts. And I thank you again, all of you, for being here. This is a great day for our working families.

Thank you.

Assault Weapons Ban

Q. Mr. President, what's your response to Dole's statement on assault weapons?

The President. Let me say, I'm not entirely sure what he meant when he said what he said. My position is clear. I fought for and passed the Brady bill, the assault weapons ban, the 100,000 police. If he now believes that we were right on that, then I applaud that. But it's not clear to me that that's what he said. So I can't comment on what he said because I'm not sure what he said.

Thanks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:10 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

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U.S. News & World Report 5/4/98

Much ado about \$6.15

BY PAUL GLASTRIS

The last time Bill Clinton proposed raising the minimum wage, back in 1996, Republicans responded with Nostradamus-like forecasts of doom. "A job killer cloaked in kindness" is how House Majority Whip Tom DeLay characterized the president's plan to hike the minimum wage from \$4.25 to \$5.15 an hour. Rep. John Shadegg warned that 1 in 4 young minority workers not in school would lose his job. Then Sen. Hank Brown predicted a juvenile crime wave "of epic proportions."

Time has not been kind to these predictions. Since the increase went into effect (in two steps, beginning Oct. 1, 1996), overall U.S. employment has climbed nearly 3 percent on a seasonally adjusted basis; employment of black youth has gone up about 11 percent; and juvenile crime has declined. Now the Clinton administration is proposing to boost the minimum wage again, to \$6.15 an hour by the year 2000. In so doing, it is making bold claims of its own--namely, that a dollar-an-hour wage hike will lift many low-income working families out of poverty.

Will Clinton's hopeful predictions about the effect of a minimum-wage increase prove any more accurate than the earlier round of gloomy ones? Probably not. In fact, recent economic studies tend to undermine the claims of politicians on both sides of the debate. Defying received economic wisdom, the studies suggest that moderate increases in the minimum wage neither do great damage to the

economy nor provide great benefits to the poor. Indeed, the harder economists look at minimum-wage hikes, the more trouble they have finding effects of any sort.

This is not what standard economics teaches. For at least the last century, mainstream economists have insisted that laws like a minimum-wage provision represent doomed attempts to repeal the even stronger laws of supply and demand. When the price of labor goes up--as it must, with a rise in the minimum wage--employers will buy less of it, and workers will lose their jobs. Congress passed the first federal minimum-wage law in 1938. Eight years later, economist George Stigler concluded, largely on theoretical grounds, that the new law was having a "substantial and certain" negative effect on employment.



Not until the 1970s were well-regarded studies done of the real-world effects of the minimum wage, which by then Congress had raised numerous times. Those studies tended to back Stigler. They showed that for every 10 percent increase in the minimum wage, there would be a 1-to-3 percentage-point drop in the employment rate of teenagers, the group most likely to be paid the minimum wage.

Minimal impact. But since then, estimates of the impact of minimum-wage hikes have been revised downward. In a 1982 study, University of Michigan economist Charles Brown and colleagues concluded that a 10 percent increase in the minimum wage would produce a falloff in teen employment closer to 1 percent than to 3 percent. In 1991, Alison Wellington, now of the College of Wooster, found only a 0.6 percent drop in teen employment. Then in 1994, Princeton University economists David Card and Alan Krueger found that moderate minimum-wage increases have no impact on jobs.

Card and Krueger compared fast-food workers in New Jersey, which raised its minimum wage above the federal level in 1992, with those in Pennsylvania, which didn't. Standard economic theory would predict that New Jersey would lose jobs relative to Pennsylvania. Yet the economists found that fast-food employment grew slightly faster in New Jersey than in Pennsylvania, though not by a statistically significant amount after other factors (such as differences in the states' overall growth rates) were taken into account.

Democrats used the study in 1996 as a shield against GOP charges that raising the federal minimum wage would kill jobs. But Card and Krueger were attacked by conservative Republicans and some economists for allegedly using sloppy phone survey techniques when gathering data. So the economists replicated their study, using data provided by the federal government. Results of the second study, released earlier this year, suggest that they were right the first time: The 1992 New Jersey minimum-wage hike had no measurable effect on jobs. Several other economists studying minimum-wage increases in other states have since reached similar conclusions.

A puzzler. Though the matter is still hotly debated among economists, the weight of evidence now strongly suggests that recent minimum-wage hikes have cost few, if any, jobs. What might explain this puzzling result? One possibility is that there is some job loss but that economists have trouble measuring it because so many other larger forces--ranging from the vagaries of local economies to student workers' taking off for spring break--make low-wage employment levels bounce around more dramatically.

Another possible explanation involves market peculiarities that give many low-wage firms some flexibility over the wages they pay. One pizza joint, for instance, might offer only the minimum wage, while another might pay 50 cents more. The first pizza joint will enjoy lower labor costs but have trouble attracting and retaining workers. The second will have higher labor costs but enough staff to make and sell more pizzas. If the government boosts the minimum wage by 50 cents, owners of low-pay pizza joints might fire workers or close up shop. Other owners might fill chronic job vacancies and ring up more pizza sales. The evidence suggests that roughly offsetting numbers of owners make each decision, so a moderate minimum-wage boost becomes a wash, neither decreasing nor increasing employment.

That's not to say that the minimum wage can be lifted indefinitely without consequence. Even Card and Krueger argue that there is a "tipping point" at which an increase in the minimum wage begins to lower employment levels. Recent boosts apparently haven't pushed the minimum wage beyond this "tipping point," in part, many economists reason, because Congress didn't raise the wage at all from

1981 to 1990, while inflation eroded its real value. Clinton's proposed \$1-an-hour increase would restore the minimum wage to about where it was relative to the median wage in the early 1980s. That would still be well below \$7.38, which is what the minimum wage was worth in today's dollars at its peak in the late 1960s, when fewer workers were covered by the law. Whether Clinton's proposed increase would cross the "tipping point" nobody knows. But the risk that it might will be seized upon by conservatives determined to block the measure.

Liberals, for their part, will argue that raising the minimum wage would divert a portion of the country's economic prosperity, about \$6 billion worth, into the wallets of low-wage workers. Yet such a diversion might do almost nothing to alleviate poverty in any measurable way. This sounds counterintuitive, but it makes sense when you understand three things. First, few low-wage workers are actually paid precisely the minimum wage; most earn slightly more. Raise the minimum wage \$1 an hour, and the average worker who benefits will see his or her hourly wage rise only 42 cents. Second, those who earn at or near the minimum wage are disproportionately, but not overwhelmingly, poor. The least-affluent 20 percent of families receive 40 percent of all minimum-wage income. The rest of that income goes to workers in families all along the income scale--including to suburban teenagers working for gas money. Third, most people living below the poverty line either don't work or have under-the-table jobs not directly affected by the minimum-wage law.

Two recent studies looked at what happened to the poverty rate after past minimum-wage increases. Neither produced statistically significant results when all other factors are taken into account, notes economist Charles Brown (whom both sides of the debate consider a neutral arbiter). In other words, when the minimum wage goes up, nothing measurable happens to the poverty rate.

This lack of impact contrasts sharply with a program economists almost uniformly prefer as a poverty fighter, the earned income tax credit. The EITC essentially gives low-income working families--and only such families--an annual rebate on their federal taxes of, on average, \$1,700 per family. That's real money, and it has had a dramatic effect. The EITC lifted 4.6 million Americans--including 2.4 million children--out of poverty in 1996, according to the Center on Budget

and Policy Priorities. Other studies suggest that the EITC acts as a work incentive: It has induced large numbers of nonworking single mothers to enter the work force. Expanding the EITC would be expensive (it already costs \$35 billion), and abuse of the program, though declining, is still high. That largely explains why neither party is talking about it. Raising the minimum wage would cost the government nothing. Raising the EITC, however, might actually work as advertised.

INFORMATION ON DOL'S PROGRAMS

I. AMERICA'S WORKFORCE NETWORK TOLL-FREE HELP LINE 1-877-US-2JOBS

America's Workforce Network (AWN) Toll-Free Help Line, 1-877-US-2JOBS, is an easy-to-remember telephone number that provides workers and employers with information needed to access public workforce services. Trained Customer Service Representatives are available to answer callers' questions from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday (except Federal holidays) in the mainland United States. All 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have entered into partnerships with the Department of Labor to provide access to such information for their workers and employers through the AWN Toll-Free Help Line. Throughout the U.S. and these jurisdictions, workers who have lost their jobs can access information about jobs and job training, and employers who are laying off workers, anticipating a business closure or seeking skilled labor can learn about relevant services offered by the Department. Over time, the AWN Toll-Free Help Line will expand, in a phased implementation to be completed by Spring 2001, to provide information about public workforce services available to other populations (e.g., youth, welfare recipients, disabled individuals, et. al.)

AMERICA'S WORKFORCE NETWORK TOLL-FREE HELP LINE

Accomplishments as of Labor Day, 2000

- Provides access to information about jobs and job training for workers in all 50 States, D.C., the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico who have been laid off from their jobs
- Provides access to information about available services for employers in all 50 States, D.C., the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico who are laying off workers, anticipating a business closure or seeking skilled labor.
- Will expand, in a phased implementation to be completed in Spring 2001, to provide information about available services to other populations—e.g., youth, welfare recipients, and disabled individuals, etc. al.
 - Provides information about services and their locations to other populations within at least five States—namely, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Alabama, New Jersey, and Utah. *

*** This item will be updated as to the possible readiness of three other States for expansion data as Labor Day approaches—namely, New York, Georgia, and Iowa.**

**Q's & A's on America's Workforce Network Toll-Free Help Line
1-877-US-2JOBS**

Q: How many calls has the Toll-Free Help Line received?

A: The National Call Center, which administers the Toll-Free Help Line, has received a relatively modest number of calls since the inception of the project in July 1999. However, now that we have accomplished partnerships with all 53 States and jurisdictions, and the National Call Center is fully operational, we are ready to launch a robust public information campaign. Experience has shown that there is substantial pent-up demand for the Toll-Free Help Line-- i.e., 1557 calls were received in 5 days in response to the inclusion of the number in the March 24 Metro Tech article in **The Washington Post**. Its potential will be more fully realized when its existence is well publicized.

Q: How much is the Toll-Free Help Line costing the taxpayer?

A: Our initial start-up investment is approximately \$15 million in support of the Toll-Free Help Line--\$8.6 million to operate the National Call Center, \$1.5 million to various support contractors, and \$5 million to States for Toll-Free Help Line implementation grants.

Q: What's the future of the Toll-Free Help Line?

A: It's part of the comprehensive strategies and products (including America's Job Bank) that the Department of Labor has developed to support the entire workforce development system. In recognition of the significance of this initiative, the Congress has appropriated \$8.5 million in FY 2000 to further support the Toll-Free Help Line, and as a result of Committee Report, we are assured of **at least** that amount for FY 2001 with the potential for up to \$22.5 million.

Q: What are the hours of operation for the Toll-Free Help Line?

A: Knowledgeable Customer Service Representatives are available to answer calls from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (except Federal holidays) in the entire mainland United States.

Q: Are there services for hearing impaired callers? foreign language speakers?

A: Yes, there is TTY service (1-877-872-5627), and information is available in over 140 languages through the AT & T Language Line. There are also Spanish-speaking Customer Service Representatives.

II. AMERICAN'S JOB BANK

America's Job Bank (www.ajb.org) is a partnership between the US Department of Labor and the state operated public Employment Service.

The America's Job Bank computerized network links state Employment Service offices to provide job seekers with the largest pool of active job opportunities available anywhere and nationwide exposure for their resumes. For employers it provides rapid, national exposure for job openings and an easily accessible pool of candidates. In addition to the Internet, the job openings and resumes found in America's Job Bank are available on computer systems in public libraries, college and universities, high school, shopping malls, transition offices on military bases worldwide and other places of public access.

- **About Our Job and Resume Listings**

Most of the jobs listed on America's Job Bank are full time listing and the majority are in the private sector. The job openings come from all over the country and represent all types of work, from professional and technical to blue collar, from management to clerical and sales.

Likewise, the resumes listed on America's Job Bank contain candidates with a wide range of skills and experience in all types of employment fields.

- **Cost**

There is no charge to either employers who list their job vacancies or to job seekers who utilize America's Job Bank to locate employment. The services provide by America's Job Bank and each state's Employment Service program are funded through Unemployment Insurance taxes paid by employers.

III. AMERICA'S LEARNING EXCHANGE

America's Learning eXchange (www.alx.com) connects users to career development, training and education, and employment resources important to remain competitive in today's workforce.

ALX is one of four complementary, Web-based services offered free to the public by the U.S. Department of Labor through America's Career Kit. ALX is supported by many professional training and educational organizations dedicated to providing the knowledge, expertise, and constituent networks to ensure users find the resources they need. Select an item below or scroll through this section to find out more about ALX.

ALX Mission and Major Components

Mission:

- The mission of America's Learning eXchange (ALX) Consortium is to develop an easily-accessible internet-based network, as an integrated component of America's Labor Information System (ALMIS), which will (1) serve as a public conduit for information about, and access to, education and training resources and (2) foster the emergence of a coherent, efficient electronic marketplace for those resources.

Objectives:

While the overall goals for ALX are stated in its mission statement, there are a number of specific strategic objectives that have been identified by the ALX consortium members. ALX will be designed to:

- include multiple databases of information about education and training, beginning with those relating to institutions, courses, vendors, and consumer information, and expand the holdings of these databases over time to encompass a significant share of the total US education and training offerings.
- create a graphic user interface, with associated supporting applications, that is easy-to-use, customer-friendly, flexible, and powerful, including Aexpert system@-based online help.
- establish a medium by which vendors, employers, and individuals can post information to it, including offering standard formats, standardizing the information captured, and assigning appropriate meta-language descriptors and codes.
- use existing coding schemes, as available, or create new taxonomies, as needed, to describe and crosswalk between training courseware, programs of study, occupations and skills.
- become self-sustaining at the end of 3-5 years, with the management and support of ALX turned over to a self-supporting non-profit entity at that time.
- be, in 3-5 years, the primary source of public knowledge about education, and training resources, as measured by Internet hits, number of vendors/institutions participating, size and scope of holdings, etc.
- operate as an integral part of the existing ALMIS system (AJB, Career InfoNet) and use the management structure set up for that system for ongoing maintenance support.
- include a dynamic feedback system by which customer suggestions for content, format, and usability are relayed to the ALX consortium.

- reduce the unit cost of individual education and training offerings by creating market efficiencies but increase the overall dollars invested on education and training in the US by rationalizing the training marketplace.
- reflect the expressed needs of its customers and respond to input from the private sector as obtained through CEG's IITLC.
- complement and promote state's Career information delivery efforts to provide Internet-based Career information.

Major Components:

- Offerings -- Searchable database of profiles on courses, seminars/workshops, degree or certificate granting programs, and training materials offered nationwide, including: classroom; Web-based; computer-based; conferences; self-study/correspondence; TV, Satellite, cable; books and publications; videotapes; audiotapes; and asynchronous training networks.
- Providers -- Searchable database of training and education service providers and developers which have registered their products with ALX
- Consumer Information -- Useful insights and annotated links to external Web sources of additional training, education, and career development information
- Specialty Databases -- Searchable databases on special training and education resources unique to a particular industry or profession
- Developer Tools -- Useful insights and annotated links to external Web-based training development and delivery tools such as HTML editors, authoring software, and computer-managed instruction systems
- Newsletters -- Electronic, monthly newsletter: "ALXconnects," featuring site development updates, events, and related information; archived at www.alx.org/news

IV. ACINet (www.acinet.org/acinet)

- In line with America's Labor Market Information System vision, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) sponsored the development of America's Career Kit. This powerful suite of tools includes America's Career InfoNet (ACINet), America's Job Bank (AJB), and America's Learning (ALX). Each product offers a unique solution to the overwhelming demands of today's labor market from the perspective of the job seeker, the employer, and the training and education community.
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INFORMATION ON DOL'S PROGRAMS

I. AMERICA'S WORKFORCE NETWORK TOLL-FREE HELP LINE 1-877-US-2JOBS

America's Workforce Network (AWN) Toll-Free Help Line, 1-877-US-2JOBS, is an easy-to-remember telephone number that provides workers and employers with information needed to access public workforce services. Trained Customer Service Representatives are available to answer callers' questions from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday (except Federal holidays) in the mainland United States. All 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have entered into partnerships with the Department of Labor to provide access to such information for their workers and employers through the AWN Toll-Free Help Line. Throughout the U.S. and these jurisdictions, workers who have lost their jobs can access information about jobs and job training, and employers who are laying off workers, anticipating a business closure or seeking skilled labor can learn about relevant services offered by the Department. Over time, the AWN Toll-Free Help Line will expand, in a phased implementation to be completed by Spring 2001, to provide information about public workforce services available to other populations (e.g., youth, welfare recipients, disabled individuals, et. al.)

AMERICA'S WORKFORCE NETWORK TOLL-FREE HELP LINE **Accomplishments as of Labor Day, 2000**

- Provides access to information about jobs and job training for workers in all 50 States, D.C., the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico who have been laid off from their jobs
- Provides access to information about available services for employers in all 50 States, D.C., the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico who are laying off workers, anticipating a business closure or seeking skilled labor.
- Will expand, in a phased implementation to be completed in Spring 2001, to provide information about available services to other populations—e.g., youth, welfare recipients, and disabled individuals, etc. al.
 - Provides information about services and their locations to other populations within at least five States—namely, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Alabama, New Jersey, and Utah. *

*** This item will be updated as to the possible readiness of three other States for expansion data as Labor Day approaches—namely, New York, Georgia, and Iowa.**

**Q's & A's on America's Workforce Network Toll-Free Help Line
1-877-US-2JOBS**

Q: How many calls has the Toll-Free Help Line received?

A: The National Call Center, which administers the Toll-Free Help Line, has received a relatively modest number of calls since the inception of the project in July 1999. However, now that we have accomplished partnerships with all 53 States and jurisdictions, and the National Call Center is fully operational, we are ready to launch a robust public information campaign. Experience has shown that there is substantial pent-up demand for the Toll-Free Help Line-- i.e., 1557 calls were received in 5 days in response to the inclusion of the number in the March 24 Metro Tech article in **The Washington Post**. Its potential will be more fully realized when its existence is well publicized.

Q: How much is the Toll-Free Help Line costing the taxpayer?

A: Our initial start-up investment is approximately \$15 million in support of the Toll-Free Help Line--\$8.6 million to operate the National Call Center, \$1.5 million to various support contractors, and \$5 million to States for Toll-Free Help Line implementation grants.

Q: What's the future of the Toll-Free Help Line?

A: It's part of the comprehensive strategies and products (including America's Job Bank) that the Department of Labor has developed to support the entire workforce development system. In recognition of the significance of this initiative, the Congress has appropriated \$8.5 million in FY 2000 to further support the Toll-Free Help Line, and as a result of Committee Report, we are assured of **at least** that amount for FY 2001 with the potential for up to \$22.5 million.

Q: What are the hours of operation for the Toll-Free Help Line?

A: Knowledgeable Customer Service Representatives are available to answer calls from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (except Federal holidays) in the entire mainland United States.

Q: Are there services for hearing impaired callers? foreign language speakers?

A: Yes, there is TTY service (1-877-872-5627), and information is available in over 140 languages through the AT & T Language Line. There are also Spanish-speaking Customer Service Representatives.

II. AMERICAN'S JOB BANK

America's Job Bank (www.ajb.org) is a partnership between the US Department of Labor and the state operated public Employment Service.

The America's Job Bank computerized network links state Employment Service offices to provide job seekers with the largest pool of active job opportunities available anywhere and nationwide exposure for their resumes. For employers it provides rapid, national exposure for job openings and an easily accessible pool of candidates. In addition to the Internet, the job openings and resumes found in America's Job Bank are available on computer systems in public libraries, college and universities, high school, shopping malls, transition offices on military bases worldwide and other places of public access.

- **About Our Job and Resume Listings**

Most of the jobs listed on America's Job Bank are full time listing and the majority are in the private sector. The job openings come from all over the country and represent all types of work, from professional and technical to blue collar, from management to clerical and sales.

Likewise, the resumes listed on America's Job Bank contain candidates with a wide range of skills and experience in all types of employment fields.

- **Cost**

There is no charge to either employers who list their job vacancies or to job seekers who utilize America's Job Bank to locate employment. The services provide by America's Job Bank and each state's Employment Service program are funded through Unemployment Insurance taxes paid by employers.

III. AMERICA'S LEARNING EXCHANGE

America's Learning eXchange (www.alx.com) connects users to career development, training and education, and employment resources important to remain competitive in today's workforce.

ALX is one of four complementary, Web-based services offered free to the public by the U.S. Department of Labor through America's Career Kit. ALX is supported by many professional training and educational organizations dedicated to providing the knowledge, expertise, and constituent networks to ensure users find the resources they need. Select an item below or scroll through this section to find out more about ALX.

ALX Mission and Major Components

Mission:

- The mission of America's Learning eXchange (ALX) Consortium is to develop an easily-accessible internet-based network, as an integrated component of America's Labor Information System (ALMIS), which will (1) serve as a public conduit for information about, and access to, education and training resources and (2) foster the emergence of a coherent, efficient electronic marketplace for those resources.

Objectives:

While the overall goals for ALX are stated in its mission statement, there are a number of specific strategic objectives that have been identified by the ALX consortium members. ALX will be designed to:

- include multiple databases of information about education and training, beginning with those relating to institutions, courses, vendors, and consumer information, and expand the holdings of these databases over time to encompass a significant share of the total US education and training offerings.
- create a graphic user interface, with associated supporting applications, that is easy-to-use, customer-friendly, flexible, and powerful, including Aexpert system@-based online help.
- establish a medium by which vendors, employers, and individuals can post information to it, including offering standard formats, standardizing the information captured, and assigning appropriate meta-language descriptors and codes.
- use existing coding schemes, as available, or create new taxonomies, as needed, to describe and crosswalk between training courseware, programs of study, occupations and skills.
- become self-sustaining at the end of 3-5 years, with the management and support of ALX turned over to a self-supporting non-profit entity at that time.
- be, in 3-5 years, the primary source of public knowledge about education, and training resources, as measured by Internet hits, number of vendors/institutions participating, size and scope of holdings, etc.
- operate as an integral part of the existing ALMIS system (AJB, Career InfoNet) and use the management structure set up for that system for ongoing maintenance support.
- include a dynamic feedback system by which customer suggestions for content, format, and usability are relayed to the ALX consortium.

- reduce the unit cost of individual education and training offerings by creating market efficiencies but increase the overall dollars invested on education and training in the US by rationalizing the training marketplace.
- reflect the expressed needs of its customers and respond to input from the private sector as obtained through CEG's IITLC.
- complement and promote state's Career information delivery efforts to provide Internet-based Career information.

Major Components:

- Offerings -- Searchable database of profiles on courses, seminars/workshops, degree or certificate granting programs, and training materials offered nationwide, including: classroom; Web-based; computer-based; conferences; self-study/correspondence; TV, Satellite, cable; books and publications; videotapes; audiotapes; and asynchronous training networks.
- Providers -- Searchable database of training and education service providers and developers which have registered their products with ALX
- Consumer Information -- Useful insights and annotated links to external Web sources of additional training, education, and career development information
- Specialty Databases -- Searchable databases on special training and education resources unique to a particular industry or profession
- Developer Tools -- Useful insights and annotated links to external Web-based training development and delivery tools such as HTML editors, authoring software, and computer-managed instruction systems
- Newsletters -- Electronic, monthly newsletter: "ALXconnects," featuring site development updates, events, and related information; archived at www.alx.org/news

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J. Dennis Hastert
Eleventh District
Illinois

(202) 225-0600



Office of the Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
August 28, 2000

The President
The White House
Washington D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

I have enjoyed working with you on several issues where we have found common ground. We have been quite successful this year in working together on repealing the Social Security Earnings Limit, fighting the war on drugs in Columbia, opening new markets in our poorest communities in America, and opening new markets overseas in China, Africa, and the Caribbean.

I would like to propose that we work over the next month to find common ground on your desire to increase the minimum wage by \$1 and our desire to help alleviate the burdens on small businesses that would shoulder the costs of such an increase.

It is very clear that a vast majority of Congressional Democrats and Republicans would like to see a balanced approach achieved before we adjourn. While the House and the Senate have passed legislation that attempts to strike this balance, a variety of procedural hurdles have prevented us from getting that legislation to your desk for signature.

Our proposal is to increase the minimum wage by \$1 in 50 cent increments that begin January 1st of next year and the remaining 50 cents on January 1st of 2002. We are also offering to drop the death tax and pension provisions in the bill that you regrettably find objectionable.

The remaining provisions are designed to assist small business with the costs of this wage increase and have a revenue impact of \$24 billion over 5 years and roughly \$76 billion over the next 10 years. We find this to be a reasonable and balanced offer that deserves your consideration.

I believe that we can work together to pass this legislation when we return in September with strong bipartisan majorities in the House and Senate. I have spoken with Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott and I believe he wants to achieve such a balanced approach as well. We would like your input and your assistance in getting this legislation to your desk before we adjourn this year. We will certainly need your help in removing the procedural roadblocks constructed to block such an effort. I look forward to working with you on this issue over the August recess.

Sincerely,

J. Dennis Hastert
Speaker of the House

Minimum Wage Increase and Modernizing Regulations

(House) Increase Minimum Wage by \$1 over two years – Effective January 1, 2001, the minimum wage will increase by \$.50, and will increase another \$.50 on January 1, 2002.

(House) Inside-Sales FLSA Exemption – The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 is outdated in its treatment of differing factions of the sales force. For example, it treats door-to-door sales employees (who are FLSA exempt) differently than those that sell using the Internet and other modern technology (who are not FLSA exempt). This provision changes the law to recognize changes in sales occupations in the workforce over the past 62 years so that inside and outside sales employees are treated the same under the law (with the exception of telemarketers). This will act to equalize their compensation and overtime rules.

(House) FLSA Clarification for Computer professionals – This provision would clarify and update the current exemption for computer professionals. Many workers have been treated as exempt professionals under the current law since 1990, when the exemption for computer professionals was enacted with bipartisan support. In the past 10 years, many new jobs which were not even contemplated have been created causing confusion as to the classification of these workers. This provision would clarify existing law, specifying the new duties that are performed by workers who are "similarly skilled" to those in the current exemption.

(House) FLSA Exemption for funeral directors – This provision would amend the Fair Labor Standards Act to exempt licensed funeral directors and licensed embalmers from minimum wage and overtime. This issue has been the subject of several court cases and this provision would clarify the treatment of such employees under the statute.

(Senate) Bonus Gainsharing – Current law dictates that employers have to recalculate an hourly employee's overtime pay if the employee receives certain types of commissions, incentives or performance bonuses. This acts as a disincentive for employers to provide these rewards because of the burdens associated with recalculating the employees' overtime pay. The provision included in the minimum wage package would allow employers to reward hourly employees in the same manner as professional employees, allowing all workers to share financially when their efforts produce gains in productivity or sales, fewer injuries or other important benefits to a company.

(Senate) Tip Credit – The Fair Labor Standards Act provides that tips received by tipped employees may be counted by the employer as "wages" for the purposes of meeting the minimum wage requirements. The employer may not pay less than \$2.13 an hour in cash wages. If an employee's tips and the cash wage paid by the employer of at least \$2.13 per hour do not equal the minimum wage, then the employer must increase the employee's cash wage to make up the difference. There are varying requirements in state laws regarding the cash wage for tipped employees. This provision would prospectively allow all employers to utilize a tip credit without reducing the wages of any tipped employees. The cash wage for tipped employees in effect on the date of enactment would be preserved in each state.

Tax Items in the Minimum Wage Package

(Senate) WOTC – Compromise to extend Work Opportunity Tax Credit through 2004 to assist businesses in hiring disadvantaged workers. *[House included no provision. Senate and Rangel substitute made permanent.]*

(House) Reforestation – Provide tax relief for reforestation expenses to create and maintain jobs *[House bill increases maximum reforestation expenses qualifying for amortization and credit from 10k to 25k; removes cap on amortization cost in 2001 and 2003. Rangel substitute increases from 10k to 20k; increases credit rate from 10% to 20%; and reduces amortization from 84 months to 36 months.]*

(Senate/House) Section 179 – Allow small businesses to expense qualifying property costs up to \$35,000 *[House, Senate and Rangel previously agreed to increase section 179 expensing to 30k.]*

(Senate/House) Meals/Entertainment – Speed up phase-in for 80% deduction of meals and entertainment expenses *[Senate increased meal/entertainment deduction to 80%. House increased meals to 60%, and 80% for those subject to DOT hour limitations. Rangel substitute increased meal/entertainment to 65% for business with sales below \$5m.]*

(Senate/House) Installment method – Repeal installment method accounting requirement.

(Senate) FUTA surtax – Repeal outdated .2% FUTA surtax *[Though the net FUTA tax rate is .8%, the permanent tax rate is only .6%. The .2% surtax was adopted in 1976 to repay loans to the fund during '74 recession – that debt was paid in '87, but Congress extended it to offset costs of spending for unrelated programs. FUTA trust fund has nearly \$20 billion surplus.]*

(Senate/House) Health deductibility 100% for self-employed – Accelerate and extend deductibility to those who choose not participate in employer-subsidized health plans *[House, Senate and Rangel substitute all make 100% deductibility immediate.]*

(Senate) Health expense above-the-line deduction – Phase-in for individuals to deduct 100% of health expenses without itemizing *[Individuals currently cannot deduct for health expenses unless they itemize and that is only 7.5%. This would free individuals of itemizing and allow them to deduct more for health insurance expenses, but not if they are covered by Medicare, government, and those whose plans are more than 50% covered by employers.]*

(House) Special Occupations Taxes – Repeal excise taxes imposed on producers and marketers of distilled spirits, wine, and beer *[Rep. John Lewis and Rep. Bob Matsui support bill by Rep. Dave Camp to eliminate these onerous taxes.]*

(House) Commercial Fisherman income averaging – Extend income-averaging benefits for farmers to include commercial fisherman.

ESTIMATED COST: \$23 billion over 5 years. \$76 billion over 10 years.

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

This is not a presidential record. This is used as an administrative marker by the William J. Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

QUOTES

Divider Title: _____

Songs of the Three Holy Children, Susanna, Manasses, I Maccabees, and II Maccabees are various apocryphal books and do not appear in many versions of the Bible.

- Action/Service/Charity
- Age/Family/Youth
- Cities
- Doctors/Health/Medicine
- Environment
- Freedom
- Golden Rule
- Law

- Language
- Leadership
- Mercy
- Music
- Peace
- Perseverance
- Truth
- Wealth

- Wisdom/Learning

Action/Service/Charity:

Thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need.

--Deuteronomy 15:7-8

Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, "Here am I...send me."

--Isaiah 6:8

He that hath mercy on the poor...happy is he.

--Proverbs 14:21

Let us not be weary in doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

--Galatians 6:9

It is more blessed to give than to receive.

--Acts 20:35

Blessed is he who considers the poor.

--Psalms 41:1

Greater love hath no man than this; that he lay down his life for his friends.

--John 15:13

Be doers of the word, not hearers only, lest you only deceive yourself.

--James 1:22

To those whom much is given, much is required (expected).

--Luke 12:48

Build up, build up, prepare a road! Remove the obstacles out of the way of my people.

--Proverbs 27:24

In the day of prosperity there is a forgetfulness of affliction: and in the day of affliction there is no more remembrance of prosperity.

--Ecclesiasticus 11:25

Wisdom/Learning

The ear tests words just as the tongue tests food. Let us discern for ourselves what is right; let us learn together what is good.

--Job 34: 3-4

Happy is the man who discovers wisdom, and he who gains knowledge.
For trading in these is better than in silver, and their profit greater than bright gold.

--Proverbs 3:13-14

My son, do not let wisdom or discretion depart from your eyes...and you will go safely on your way, and your feet will have no cause to stumble.

--Proverbs 3:21-24

By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established.

--Proverbs 24:3-4

Wise men lay up knowledge.

--Proverbs 10:14

In teaching ...precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.

--Isaiah 28:10

Do you understand what you are reading?

How Can I, unless some one guides me?

--Conversation between Phillip and an Ethiopian Official

--Acts 8:30-31

CIVIL RIGHTS

No man can put a chain about the ankle of his fellow man without at last finding the other end fastened about his own neck.

--Frederick Douglass

Both tears and sweat are salty, but they render a different result. Tears will get you sympathy; sweat will get you change.

--Jessie Jackson

Our economic situation today is good, and it can be better. The lessons of the past and the magnificent challenge of the future continue to spur us on. For all to thrive and prosper together, all must work together with mutual understanding and common purposes.

--Harry S. Truman

The current strength of the economy is our starting point today. We must move forward to advance that strength year by year.

--Harry S. Truman

I think the main issue in this year's election ought to be, now what? What are you going to do with this prosperity?

--President Clinton

A strong and growing economy is the best way to offer opportunity to every American who is willing to work for it.

--President Clinton

Haste does not result in prosperity.

--Swahili Proverb

Should your riches increase, let your mind keep pace with them

--Thomas Browne

If you want 1 year of prosperity, grow grain. If you want 10 years of prosperity, grow trees. If you want 100 years of prosperity, grow people.

--Chinese Proverb

Prosperity is only an instrument to be used, not a deity to be worshiped.

--Calvin Coolidge

We have to find a way to keep the economy going and then to bring the benefits of the economy to the people in places who haven't been a part of this prosperity.

--President Clinton

...if we cannot create an inter-connected global economy that is increasing prosperity and genuine opportunity for people everywhere, then all of our political initiatives are going to be less successful.

--President Clinton

More than 60 years ago, at the dawn of another era of great change, President Franklin Roosevelt told our Nation, "new conditions impose new requirements on Government and those who conduct Government." From that simple proposition, Roosevelt shaped the New Deal, which helped to restore our Nation to prosperity and to define the relationship between the American people and their Government for 50 years.

--President Clinton

I believe that the legacy will be transformation, movement, the restoration of prosperity and hope.

--President Clinton

A creative economy is the fuel of magnificence.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

As president, my interest is in an economy which will be strong enough to absorb the potential of a rapidly expanding population, steady enough to avert the wide swings which bring grief to so many of our people, and non inflammatory enough to persuade investors that this country holds a steady promise of growth and stability.

--John F. Kennedy

...we must be careful that people who make \$5,000 a year are not pitted against those who make \$25,000 a year by those who make \$900,000. The two-martinis-for-lunch bunch would love for us to fight each other over the resources they have made scarce.

--Barbara Mikulski

Economy is idealism in its most practical form.

--Calvin Coolidge

Economy is the art of making the most of life. The love of economy is the root of all virtue.

--George Bernard Shaw

Economy is the science of avoiding unnecessary expenditure, or the art of managing our property with moderation.

--Lucius Annaeus Seneca, the Younger

Economy, the poor man's mint.

--Martin Farquhar Tupper

Of all the branches of political economy, the human face is perhaps the best criterion of value.

--William Hazlitt

There can be no economy where there is no efficiency.

--Benjamin Disraeli

We are no longer prisoners in an economy of scarcity where one man's wealth causes another man's misery.

--Lyndon B. Johnson

Economy does not lie in sparing money, but in spending it wisely.

--Thomas Huxley

The federal budget can and should be made an instrument of prosperity and stability, not a deterrent to recovery.

--John F. Kennedy

A rising tide lifts all boats.

--John F. Kennedy

I see America not in the setting sun of a black night of despair...I see America in the crimson light of a rising sun fresh from the burning, creative hand of God...I see great days ahead for men and women of will and vision

--Carl Sandburg

I tell you the past is a bucket of ashes, so line not in your yesterdays, not just for tomorrow, but in the here and now.

--Carl Sandburg

In our present dynamic economy, the task of conservation is not to lockup our resources but to develop and improve them. Failure, today, to make the investments which are necessary to support our progress in the future would be false economy.

--Harry S. Truman, 1949 SOTU

We must raise our sights – and strive to realize each person’s highest productive and earning capability. We must seek to develop more completely our people’s talents and to employ these talents fully – to fulfill the rich promise of technological advance and to enable all to share in its benefits.

--Lyndon B. Johnson, March 9, 1964

In the day of prosperity, there is a forgetfulness of affliction.

--Biblical Apocrypha, Wisdom of Ben Sira 11:25

In a land of great wealth, families must not live in hopeless poverty. In a land rich in harvest, children just must not go hungry.

--Lyndon B. Johnson, Inaugural Address

The quality of American life must keep pace with the quality of American goods.

--John F. Kennedy, SOTU, 1963

This country cannot afford to be materially rich and spiritually poor.

--John F. Kennedy, SOTU, 1963

If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome.

--Anne Bradstreet, “Meditations Divine and Moral,” 1655

Prosperity is only an instrument to be used, not a deity to be worshipped.

--Calvin Coolidge, June 11, 1928

**Materials for President's Labor Day Radio Address Re:
America's Workforce Network Toll-Free Help Line
1-877-US-2JOBS**

Time Line

Labor Day, 2000	Five Founder States—Missouri, Alabama, New Jersey, Utah, & Pennsylvania—will have provided data to the National Call Center on all Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services in their States
March 31, 2001	Toll-Free Help Line is expanded to provide information on all WIA services nationwide

Services Now and Service Post-Expansion

Current Services:	Provides access to information about jobs and job training for workers in all 50 States, D.C., the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico who have been laid off from their jobs. Provides access to information about available DOL services for employers in all 50 States, D.C., the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico who are laying off workers, anticipating a business closure or seeking skilled labor.
Expanded Services:	Will provide individuals with access to information about WIA services for all populations—e.g., youth, welfare recipients, disabled individuals, migrants and seasonal farm workers, Indians and Native Americans, older workers, et. al.

Success Rates

This information is not available at this time.

Profiles of Users

Current Users:	Dislocated (unemployed) workers who have lost their jobs as a result of layoffs or plant closings and employers who are laying off workers, anticipating a business closure or seeking skilled labor.
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Expansion Users:

All populations served by the Workforce Investment Act as indicated in post-expansion item above.

Call Volume & Types of Calls

Report being faxed by National Call Center contractor (e-mail not operative at the moment) as we speak. Will bring down to you.

Scott McCre → Elaine Howard
6936049 SW

INFORMATION ON DOL'S PROGRAMS

I. AMERICA'S WORKFORCE NETWORK TOLL-FREE HELP LINE 1-877-US-2JOBS

America's Workforce Network (AWN) Toll-Free Help Line, 1-877-US-2JOBS, is an easy-to-remember telephone number that provides workers and employers with information needed to access public workforce services. Trained Customer Service Representatives are available to answer callers' questions from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday (except Federal holidays) in the mainland United States. All 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have entered into partnerships with the Department of Labor to provide access to such information for their workers and employers through the AWN Toll-Free Help Line. Throughout the U.S. and these jurisdictions, workers who have lost their jobs can access information about jobs and job training, and employers who are laying off workers, anticipating a business closure or seeking skilled labor can learn about relevant services offered by the Department. Over time, the AWN Toll-Free Help Line will expand, in a phased implementation to be completed by Spring 2001, to provide information about public workforce services available to other populations (e.g., youth, welfare recipients, disabled individuals, et. al.)

expansion of services

AMERICA'S WORKFORCE NETWORK TOLL-FREE HELP LINE **Accomplishments as of Labor Day, 2000**

- Provides access to information about jobs and job training for workers in all 50 States, D.C., the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico who have been laid off from their jobs
- Provides access to information about available services for employers in all 50 States, D.C., the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico who are laying off workers, anticipating a business closure or seeking skilled labor.

Will expand, in a phased implementation to be completed in Spring 2001, to provide information about available services to other populations—e.g., youth, welfare recipients, and disabled individuals, etc. al.

- Provides information about services and their locations to other populations within at least five States—namely, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Alabama, New Jersey, and Utah. *

*** This item will be updated as to the possible readiness of three other States for expansion data as Labor Day approaches—namely, New York, Georgia, and Iowa.**

announcing expansion

Q's & A's on America's Workforce Network Toll-Free Help Line
1-877-US-2JOBS

Q: How many calls has the Toll-Free Help Line received?

A: The National Call Center, which administers the Toll-Free Help Line, has received a relatively modest number of calls since the inception of the project in July 1999. However, now that we have accomplished partnerships with all 53 States and jurisdictions, and the National Call Center is fully operational, we are ready to launch a robust public information campaign. Experience has shown that there is substantial pent-up demand for the Toll-Free Help Line-- i.e., 1557 calls were received in 5 days in response to the inclusion of the number in the March 24 Metro Tech article in **The Washington Post**. Its potential will be more fully realized when its existence is well publicized.

Q: How much is the Toll-Free Help Line costing the taxpayer?

A: Our initial start-up investment is approximately \$15 million in support of the Toll-Free Help Line--\$8.6 million to operate the National Call Center, \$1.5 million to various support contractors, and \$5 million to States for Toll-Free Help Line implementation grants.

Q: What's the future of the Toll-Free Help Line?

A: It's part of the comprehensive strategies and products (including America's Job Bank) that the Department of Labor has developed to support the entire workforce development system. In recognition of the significance of this initiative, the Congress has appropriated \$8.5 million in FY 2000 to further support the Toll-Free Help Line, and as a result of Committee Report, we are assured of **at least** that amount for FY 2001 with the potential for up to \$22.5 million.

Q: What are the hours of operation for the Toll-Free Help Line?

A: Knowledgeable Customer Service Representatives are available to answer calls from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (except Federal holidays) in the entire mainland United States.

Q: Are there services for hearing impaired callers? foreign language speakers?

A: Yes, there is TTY service (1-877-872-5627), and information is available in over 140 languages through the AT & T Language Line. There are also Spanish-speaking Customer Service Representatives.

II. AMERICAN'S JOB BANK

America's Job Bank (www.ajb.org) is a partnership between the US Department of Labor and the state operated public Employment Service.

The America's Job Bank computerized network links state Employment Service offices to provide job seekers with the largest pool of active job opportunities available anywhere and nationwide exposure for their resumes. For employers it provides rapid, national exposure for job openings and an easily accessible pool of candidates. In addition to the Internet, the job openings and resumes found in America's Job Bank are available on computer systems in public libraries, college and universities, high school, shopping malls, transition offices on military bases worldwide and other places of public access.

- **About Our Job and Resume Listings**

Most of the jobs listed on America's Job Bank are full time listing and the majority are in the private sector. The job openings come from all over the country and represent all types of work, from professional and technical to blue collar, from management to clerical and sales.

Likewise, the resumes listed on America's Job Bank contain candidates with a wide range of skills and experience in all types of employment fields.

- **Cost**

There is no charge to either employers who list their job vacancies or to job seekers who utilize America's Job Bank to locate employment. The services provide by America's Job Bank and each state's Employment Service program are funded through Unemployment Insurance taxes paid by employers.

III. AMERICA'S LEARNING EXCHANGE

America's Learning eXchange (www.alx.com) connects users to career development, training and education, and employment resources important to remain competitive in today's workforce.

ALX is one of four complementary, Web-based services offered free to the public by the U.S. Department of Labor through America's Career Kit. ALX is supported by many professional training and educational organizations dedicated to providing the knowledge, expertise, and constituent networks to ensure users find the resources they need. Select an item below or scroll through this section to find out more about ALX.

ALX Mission and Major Components

Mission:

- The mission of America's Learning eXchange (ALX) Consortium is to develop an easily-accessible internet-based network, as an integrated component of America's Labor Information System (ALMIS), which will (1) serve as a public conduit for information about, and access to, education and training resources and (2) foster the emergence of a coherent, efficient electronic marketplace for those resources.

Objectives:

While the overall goals for ALX are stated in its mission statement, there are a number of specific strategic objectives that have been identified by the ALX consortium members. ALX will be designed to:

- include multiple databases of information about education and training, beginning with those relating to institutions, courses, vendors, and consumer information, and expand the holdings of these databases over time to encompass a significant share of the total US education and training offerings.
- create a graphic user interface, with associated supporting applications, that is easy-to-use, customer-friendly, flexible, and powerful, including Aexpert system@-based online help.
- establish a medium by which vendors, employers, and individuals can post information to it, including offering standard formats, standardizing the information captured, and assigning appropriate meta-language descriptors and codes.
- use existing coding schemes, as available, or create new taxonomies, as needed, to describe and crosswalk between training courseware, programs of study, occupations and skills.
- become self-sustaining at the end of 3-5 years, with the management and support of ALX turned over to a self-supporting non-profit entity at that time.
- be, in 3-5 years, the primary source of public knowledge about education, and training resources, as measured by Internet hits, number of vendors/institutions participating, size and scope of holdings, etc.
- operate as an integral part of the existing ALMIS system (AJB, Career InfoNet) and use the management structure set up for that system for ongoing maintenance support.
- include a dynamic feedback system by which customer suggestions for content, format, and usability are relayed to the ALX consortium.

- reduce the unit cost of individual education and training offerings by creating market efficiencies but increase the overall dollars invested on education and training in the US by rationalizing the training marketplace.
- reflect the expressed needs of its customers and respond to input from the private sector as obtained through CEG's IITLC.
- complement and promote state's Career information delivery efforts to provide Internet-based Career information.

Major Components:

- Offerings -- Searchable database of profiles on courses, seminars/workshops, degree or certificate granting programs, and training materials offered nationwide, including: classroom; Web-based; computer-based; conferences; self-study/correspondence; TV, Satellite, cable; books and publications; videotapes; audiotapes; and asynchronous training networks.
- Providers – Searchable database of training and education service providers and developers which have registered their products with ALX
- Consumer Information – Useful insights and annotated links to external Web sources of additional training, education, and career development information
- Specialty Databases – Searchable databases on special training and education resources unique to a particular industry or profession
- Developer Tools – Useful insights and annotated links to external Web-based training development and delivery tools such as HTML editors, authoring software, and computer-managed instruction systems
- Newsletters – Electronic, monthly newsletter: "ALXconnects," featuring site development updates, events, and related information; archived at www.alx.org/news

IV. ACINet (www.acinet.org/acinet)

- In line with America's Labor Market Information System vision, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) sponsored the development of America's Career Kit. This powerful suite of tools includes America's Career InfoNet (ACINet), America's Job Bank (AJB), and America's Learning (ALX). Each product offers a unique solution to the overwhelming demands of today's labor market from the perspective of the job seeker, the employer, and the training and education community.
- ACINet, the oldest of the Career Kit products, traces its beginnings to June of 1996. At that time, DOL began development of a web-based application in support of America's Labor Market Information System (ALMIS). This application, called ACINet, accesses the ALMIS Database and displays a variety

of occupational, demographic, and labor market information at the local, state, and national levels. It also includes an extensive collection of links to other Internet resources through its Career Resource Library. The application is currently hosted at a site in Albany, New York, where AJB and ALX also are hosted.

- Vice President Al Gore announced the release of the inaugural version of ACINet in November 1997. Subsequent enhancements have been made on a regular basis and Version 3.2 was released in April 2000.

V. O*NET (<http://www.doleta.gov/programs/onet/>)

What Is O*NET?

- O*NET, the Occupational Information Network, is an easy-to-use database that runs on a Windows-based personal computer. It contains comprehensive information on job requirements and worker competencies. O*NET replaces the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* and offers a more dynamic framework for exploring the world of work. With O*NET, employers of all sizes and across all fields have a powerful means for accessing critical information that impacts their bottom-line every day.
- O*NET is a collaborative project, joining the public and private interests. It puts into practice the growing recognition that no one effort can cover all aspects or target all the dimensions involved in understanding the changing workplace. Input at all levels and from all sectors is needed and actively encouraged.
- O*NET is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. Regional support has been provided by State-based Occupational Analysis Field Centers and Assessment Research and Development Program Centers. Firms competitively selected from the private sector, including Aguirre International, American Institutes for Research, and Trefoil, Inc. have supplied the expertise needed to implement the project. The National O*NET Consortium has been established to provide O*NET data collection and database maintenance functions. O*NET pilot projects and O*NET/School-to-Work grants, whose activities are described elsewhere on this site, are working with multiple users, vendors, and others to produce O*NET tools with broad applicability within the employment and training system.
- O*NET, along with America's Job Bank, America's Talent Bank, America's Career InfoNet and America's Learning Exchange, is part of the DOL/ETA comprehensive workforce development strategy to build and display critical information for job seekers and employers in a user-friendly manner.

Draft 08/31/00 8:45pm
Josh Gottheimer

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
RADIO ADDRESS ON THE MINIMUM WAGE
SYRACUSE, NY
September 1, 2000**

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But even at this time of unprecedented prosperity, millions of Americans are still working every day for the minimum wage. Today I want to talk about giving these working Americans a much-deserved raise.

Every one of us knows someone who works for the minimum wage, and often struggles to make ends meet. People like Cheryl Costas, a mother of four I met just a few months ago. Cheryl's from a small town in Pennsylvania, and works at a local convenience store for the minimum wage, so she can support her four children and her disabled husband. As she said to me, "\$5.15 an hour doesn't pay the bills ... It doesn't put food on the table."

Like Cheryl, seventy percent of all workers on the minimum wage are adults; almost 50 percent work full-time; and 60 percent are women. In many cases, they are the family's sole breadwinners, struggling to raise their kids on \$10,700 a year. These hard-working Americans need – and deserve – a raise.

For more than seven years now, our Administration has sought to build an America that promotes responsibility and rewards work. That's why we expanded the Earned Income Tax Credit, and cut taxes for millions of hard-pressed working parents. That's why we fought to pass the Family Medical Leave Act, and are working for better health care and child care. And it's why in 1996, I signed legislation to raise the minimum wage to \$5.15 an hour over two years.

It's long passed time that we raised it again. In fact, more than a year-and-a-half ago, I proposed to raise the minimum wage by a dollar over two years. That's a modest increase that merely restores the minimum wage to what it was back in 1982, in real dollar terms. Still, that's no small change to the more than 10 million Americans who work for the minimum wage: for a full-time worker, it would mean another \$2,000 a year – enough for a family of four to buy groceries for seven months or pay their rent check for five months.

But month after month, even with bipartisan support in Congress, the Republican leadership has sat on our proposal to raise the minimum wage – costing the average full-time worker more than \$1,000 in lost wages. So far, it's been the victim of every legislative maneuver in the Congressional handbook – from poison pill attachments to special interest strong-arming. Some Republicans have even reverted to the same attacks they used in 1996, the

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My message to the Congress is simple: stop the stalling. If the subject is tax breaks for the wealthy or legislative loopholes for the special interests, this Congress moves with record speed. It’s now time for the Republican leadership to stop riding the breaks on the minimum wage. So, when you get back to work next week, send me the minimum wage bill as your first order of business. That’s what the American people want.

Once we secure this victory for hard-pressed working families, then we can get to work on our other pressing priorities: Passing a real Patient’s Bill of Rights. Investing more and demanding more from our schools. Paying down the debt. And extending the life of Social Security and Medicare and providing a voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit for all seniors.

Raising the minimum wage isn’t just about dollars and cents. It’s about our fundamental values: everybody counts, everybody deserves a chance, and we all do better when we help each other. American workers have kept their end of the deal. Let’s keep ours, and honor Labor Day the right way by giving working Americans the raise they’ve earned. Thanks for listening.

Subject: FINAL--Minimum Wage Radio Address

Date: Thu, 31 Aug 2000 20:54:49 -0400

From: Joshua_S._Gottheimer@who.eop.gov

To: Joshua_S._Gottheimer@who.eop.gov, James_R._Kvaal@opd.eop.gov,
Elliot_J._Diringer@who.eop.gov, aedmonds1@home.com,
Terry_Edmonds@who.eop.gov, Jeffrey_A._Shesol@who.eop.gov,
Michele_Ballantyne@who.eop.gov, Fern_Mechlowitz@who.eop.gov,
Rachael_F._Goldfarb@who.eop.gov, John_Podesta@who.eop.gov,
Karen_Tramontano@who.eop.gov, Carolyn_T._Wu@who.eop.gov,
Irene_Bueno@who.eop.gov, Maria_Echaveste@who.eop.gov,
Rochelle_G._Thompson@who.eop.gov, Christine_M._Glunz@who.eop.gov,
Linda_Ricci@omb.eop.gov, Patrick_M._Dorton@opd.eop.gov,
Jason_Furman@opd.eop.gov, Loretta_M._Ucelli@who.eop.gov,
Melissa_G._Green@opd.eop.gov, Joseph_N._Crisci@opd.eop.gov,
Joseph_P._Lockhart@who.eop.gov, Jenni_R._Engebretsen@who.eop.gov,
Bruce_N._Reed@opd.eop.gov, Cathy_R._Mays@opd.eop.gov,
Thomas_L._Freedman@who.eop.gov, Emil_J._Barth@who.eop.gov,
Christopher_C._Jennings@opd.eop.gov, Jennifer_E._McGee@opd.eop.gov,
Karin_Kullman@opd.eop.gov, Steve_Ricchetti@who.eop.gov,
Jennifer_L._Dewitt@who.eop.gov, Mara_A._Silver@who.eop.gov,
Richard_L._Siewert@who.eop.gov, Deborah_R._Adler@opd.eop.gov,
Stephanie_A._Cutter@who.eop.gov, Christopher_M._Wanken@opd.eop.gov,
Cheri_L._Stockham@who.eop.gov, Drew_T._Gardiner@who.eop.gov,
Valerie_J._Owens@who.eop.gov, Barbara_Chow@omb.eop.gov, shesol@aol.com,
gottheim@aol.com, Joel_Johnson@who.eop.gov

Final 08/31/00 8:45pm
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wed, aug 1 ~~opportunities~~
a new record of achievement,

~~changes~~
we've seen since
that ~~changes~~ is
Rep's Starnes may be
opposed to the
opportunity may be
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~~exactly~~
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For more than seven years now, our Administration has sought to build an America that promotes responsibility and rewards work. That's why we expanded the Earned Income Tax Credit, and cut taxes for millions of hard-pressed working parents. That's why we fought to pass the Family Medical Leave Act, and are working for better health care and child care. And it's why in 1996, I signed legislation to raise the minimum wage to \$5.15 an hour over two years.

It's long past time that we raised it again. In fact, more than a year-and-a-half ago, I proposed to raise the minimum wage by a dollar over two years. That's a modest increase that merely restores the minimum wage to what it was back in 1982, in real dollar terms. Still, that's no small change to the more than 10 million Americans who work for the minimum wage: for a full-time worker, it would mean another \$2,000 a year – enough for a family of four to buy groceries for seven months or pay their rent check for five months.

But month after month, even with bipartisan support in Congress, the Republican leadership has sat on our proposal to raise the minimum wage – costing the average full-time worker more than \$1,000 in lost wages. So far, it's been the victim of every legislative maneuver in the Congressional handbook – from poison pill attachments to special interest strong-arming. Some Republicans have even reverted to the same attacks they used in 1996, the

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My message to the Congress is simple: stop the stalling. If the subject is tax breaks for the wealthy or legislative loopholes for the special interests, this Congress moves with record speed. It's now time for the Republican leadership to stop riding the breaks on the minimum wage. So, when you get back to work next week, send me the minimum wage bill as your first order of business. That's what the American people ^{workers} want. ~~deserve~~.

Once we secure this victory for hard-pressed working families, then we can get to work on our other pressing priorities: Passing a real Patient's Bill of Rights. Investing more and demanding more from our schools. Paying down the debt. And extending the life of Social Security and Medicare and providing a voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit for all seniors.

Raising the minimum wage isn't just about dollars and cents. It's about our fundamental values: everybody counts, everybody deserves a chance, and we all do better when we help each other. American workers have kept their end of the deal. Let's keep ours, and honor Labor Day the right way by giving working Americans the raise they've earned. Thanks for listening.

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doing freshman orientation
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**MEMORANDUM
OF CALL**

Previous editions usable

TO:

☐ YOU WERE CALLED BY— ☐ YOU WERE VISITED BY—

OF (Organization)

☐ PLEASE PHONE ► (Enter area code, if necessary) ☐ DSN

☐ WILL CALL AGAIN ☐ IS WAITING TO SEE YOU
☐ RETURNED YOUR CALL ☐ WISHES AN APPOINTMENT

MESSAGE

RECEIVED BY

DATE

TIME



PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
RADIO ADDRESS ON THE MINIMUM WAGE
SYRACUSE, NY
September 1, 2000

22
Good morning. On this Labor Day Weekend, as we relax with our families, we honor the hard working men and women who've helped build the strongest economy in our nation's history. With more than 25 million new jobs, record surpluses, and the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, all Americans have a right to be proud.

But even at this time of unprecedented prosperity, too many Americans are working every day for the minimum wage. They work hard, hour after hour, to keep our economy strong and our quality of life high. Today I want to talk to you about giving these working Americans a much-deserved raise.

Every one of us knows someone who works for the minimum wage, and often struggles to make ends meet. People like Cheryl Costas, a mother of four I met just a few months ago. Cheryl's from a small town in Pennsylvania, and works at a local convenience store for the minimum wage, so she can support her four children and her disabled husband. As she said to me, "\$5.15 an hour doesn't pay the bills ... It doesn't put food on the table."

Like Cheryl,
~~No one understands the importance of raising the minimum wage more than people like Cheryl Costas. Seventy percent of all workers on the minimum wage are adults; almost 50 percent work full-time; and 60 percent of them are women. In total, more than 10 million Americans are working for about \$5.15 an hour. And in many cases, like Cheryl's, they are the family's sole breadwinners, struggling to raise their kids on \$10,700 a year. These hard-working Americans need – and deserve – a raise.~~

For more than seven years now, our Administration has sought to build an America that promotes responsibility and rewards work. ~~Where all our citizens have the opportunity to make the most of their potential.~~ That's why we expanded the Earned Income Tax Credit, and cut taxes for millions of hard-pressed working parents. That's why we fought to pass the Family Medical Leave Act, and are working for better health care and child care. And why in 1996, I signed legislation to raise the minimum wage to \$5.15 an hour over two years. *it is*

It's high time we did it again. More than a year-and-a-half ago, in my State of the Union Address, I proposed to raise the minimum wage by a dollar over two years. That's a modest increase that merely restores the minimum wage to what it was back in 1982, in real dollar terms. Still, that's no small change to the more than 10 million Americans who work for the minimum wage: for a full-time worker, it would mean another \$2,000 a year. That's real money – enough for a family of four to buy groceries for seven months or pay their rent check for five months.

Draft 08/31/00 2:25pm
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[Every one of us knows someone who works for the minimum wage, and often struggles to make ends meet.] People like Cheryl Costas, a mother of four I met just a few months ago. Cheryl's from a small town in Pennsylvania, and works at a local convenience store for the minimum wage. ~~so she can support her four children and her disabled husband.~~ *on this manager is along but she says,* As she said to me, "\$5.15 an hour doesn't pay the bills ... It doesn't put food on the table."

Cheryl's right. We owe it to these hard-workers to raise the minimum wage.
No one understands the importance of raising the minimum wage more than people like Cheryl Costas. Seventy percent of all workers on the minimum wage are adults; almost 50 percent work full-time; and 60 percent of them are women. In total, more than 10 million Americans are working for about \$5.15 an hour. And in many cases, like Cheryl's, they are the family's sole breadwinners, struggling to raise their kids on \$10,700 a year. These hard-working Americans need – and deserve – ~~a raise.~~ *our help.*

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Guzman

I Hear America Singing
(In Leaves of Grass, 1860)
by Walt Whitman

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be
.....blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves
.....off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deck
.....hand singing on the steamboat deck,
The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter singing
.....as he stands,
The wood-cutter's song, the ploughboy's on his way in the
.....morning, or at noon intermission or at sundown,
The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work,
.....or of the girl sewing or washing,
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,
The day what belongs to the day--at night the party of young
.....fellows, robust, friendly,
Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.

Cornhuskers: Psalm of
Those Who Go Forth Before Daylight
by Carl Sandburg, 1918

THE policeman buys shoes slow and careful; the teamster buys gloves slow and careful; they take care of their feet and hands; they live on their feet and hands.

The milkman never argues; he works alone and no one speaks to him; the city is asleep when he is on the job; he puts a bottle on six hundred porches and calls it a day's work; he climbs two hundred wooden stairways; two horses are company for him; he never argues.

The rolling-mill men and the sheet-steel men are brothers of cinders; they empty cinders out of their shoes after the day's work; they ask their wives to fix burnt holes in the knees of their trousers; their necks and ears are covered with a smut; they scour their necks and ears; they are brothers of cinders.

The Man with the Hoe
by Edwin Markham

(The following poem and painting are moving testimonies to what the too prevalent inhumanity of humanity can cause.)

Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans
Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
The emptiness of ages in his face,
And on his back, the burden of the world.
Who made him dead to rapture and despair,
A thing that grieves not and that never hopes,
Stolid and stunned, a brother to the ox?
Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
Whose was the hand that slanted back this brow?
Whose breath blew out the light within this brain?

Is this the Thing the Lord God made and gave
To have dominion over sea and land;
To trace the stars and search the heavens for power;
To feel the passion of Eternity?
Is this the dream He dreamed who shaped the suns
And marked their ways upon the ancient deep?
Down all the caverns of Hell to their last gulf
There is no shape more terrible than this--
More tongued with cries against the world's blind greed--
More filled with signs and portents for the soul--
More packed with danger to the universe.

What gulfs between him and the seraphim!

Slave of the wheel of labor, what to him
Are Plato and the swing of the Pleiades?
What the long reaches of the peaks of song,
The rift of dawn, the reddening of the rose?
Through this dread shape the suffering ages look;
Time's tragedy is in that aching stoop;
Through this dread shape humanity betrayed,
Plundered, profaned and disinherited,
Cries protest to the Powers that made the world,
A protest that is also prophecy.



"L'homme à la houe"
by Jean-François Millet

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
Is this the handiwork you give to God,
This monstrous thing distorted and soul-quenched?
How will you ever straighten up this shape;
Touch it again with immortality;
Give back the upward looking and the light;

Rebuild in it the music and the dream;
Make right the immemorial infamies,
Perfidious wrongs, immedicable woes?

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
How will the future reckon with this Man?
How answer his brute question in that hour
When whirlwinds of rebellion shake all shores?
How will it be with kingdoms and with kings--
With those who shaped him to the thing he is--
When this dumb Terror shall rise to judge the world,
After the silence of the centuries?

The Village Blacksmith by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Under a spreading chestnut tree
the village smithy stands.
The smith, a mighty man is he,
with large and sinewy hands,
and the muscles of his brawny arms
are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
his face is like the tan.
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can
and looks the whole world in the face
for he owes not any man.



Illustration by Estelle Hollingsworth

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
you can hear his bellows blow.
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge
with measured beat and slow.
Like a sexton ringing the village bell
when the evening sun is low.

And the children coming home from school
look in at the open door.
They love to see the flaming forge
and hear the bellows roar
and catch the burning sparks that fly
like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
and sits among his boys.
He hears the parson pray and preach,

he hears his daughter's voice,
singing in the village choir,
and it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
singing in Paradise.

He needs must think of her once more,
how in the grave she lies,
and with his hard, rough hand
he wipes a tear out of his eyes.

Toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing,
onward through life he goes;
each morning sees some task begin
each evening sees it close.
Something attempted, something done,
has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
for the lesson thou hast taught.
Thus at the flaming forge of life,
our fortunes must be wrought.
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
each burning deed and thought.

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NOTE: All of the graphics featured here
were found on numerous web sites and are
free to anyone. If you see a graphic that
is not free,

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For more than a year now, even with bipartisan support in Congress, the Republican leadership has sat on our proposal to raise the minimum wage – costing the average full-time worker more than \$900 in lost wages. They've tried to load up our legislation with poison pills and tax breaks for special interests. Some Republicans have even reverted to the same attacks they used in 1996, the last time we raised the minimum wage. Back then, they called a minimum wage increase, "a job killer cloaked in kindness" that would lead to a "juvenile crime wave of epic proportions." My fellow Americans, the only thing of epic proportions has been the growth of our economy. Since we last raised the minimum wage, our economy has created more than 11 million new jobs. Study after study has shown that raising the minimum wage is not only the right thing to do for working families, it's the smart thing to do for our economy.

So I say to the Congress: when you get back to work next week, make passing the minimum wage your first order of business. That's what the American people want. ~~And, as we learned this week, that's what more and more Republican Members of Congress want. But we all know that this won't be a real victory until the minimum wage bill is on my desk.~~ Then we can get to work on our other pressing priorities: Passing a real Patient's Bill of Rights. Investing more and demanding more from our schools. Paying down the debt by 2012, to keep interest rates low. And extending the life of Social Security and Medicare and providing a voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit for all seniors.

Harry Truman once said, "Everybody ought to have a fair and square chance at the economic prosperity of this country." American workers have kept their end of the deal. Let's keep ours, and honor Labor Day the right way by giving working Americans the raise they've earned. Thanks for listening, and have a wonderful Labor Day weekend.

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Americans (workers)

Can testify to, what more Americans need.

COMMUNITY

It is community of purpose that constitutes society.

--Benjamin Disraeli

The community stagnates without the impulse of the individual. The impulse dies away without the sympathy of the community.

--William James

Without a sense of caring, there can be no sense of community.

--Anthony J. D'Angelo

A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm.

--Henrik Ibsen

Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for a moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.

--George Bernard Shaw

Community demands a place where people can see and know each other, where children can play and adults work together and join in the pleasures and responsibilities of the place where they live.

--Robert F. Kennedy

It is not the bigness that should be our goal. We must attempt, rather, to bring people back to... the warmth of community, to the worth of individual effort and responsibility...and of individuals working together as a community, to better their lives and their children's future.

--Robert F. Kennedy

What is government but the greatest of all reflections on human nature.

--James Madison

Important principles may and must be inflexible.

--Abraham Lincoln

We must be willing to learn the lesson that cooperation may imply compromise.

--Eleanor Roosevelt

Everybody ought to have a fair and square chance at the economic prosperity of this country.

--Harry S. Truman, May 8, 1950

should have

*The book
shouldn't
stop here.*

(Truman)

*we can
do that
right now
by raising
money
day by day
two years*

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Statement by the President: **Labor Day.***August 31, 1950*

WE HAVE good reason for special observance of this **Labor Day**. ~~It should be a day of thanksgiving for past accomplishments and present opportunity; but it should also be a day of solemn dedication to the tasks that lie ahead of us.~~ This year, especially, **Labor Day** symbolizes our facing forward as a Nation in the heroic tasks we have assumed, with other free nations of the world, in the cause of peace.

It is appropriate on this **Labor Day**—as on this great holiday in the past—that we pay tribute to the tremendous achievements of American labor. Each year since the end of World War II we have had increasing cause to celebrate the record the working men and women of our country have made in helping to build a stronger and more vigorous economy.

The world has long witnessed the benefits that free labor has achieved under our democratic institutions. The working men and women of this country enjoy high wages, good working and living standards, and great opportunities. They are partners in a living democracy; today, more than ever before, they are a vital force in every section of our public life.

It is the purpose of the United States in the world today to bring about conditions of peace under which working men and women, in every land, can achieve better lives, and participate in the affairs of their own nations. We know that to reach this goal will require sustained hard work, by every one in our country and in all the free countries.

One of the great obstacles in the way is the Communist movement, which falsely professes to be the friend of those who labor, but which reduces the working man to slavery wherever it attains power. Today, this movement has violated the peace of the world. It threatens the free nations with aggression. In the face of this threat, our country has taken the only course that can lead to peace. We and other free nations, acting through the United Nations, have given unmistakable notice that armed aggression will be met with armed defense. And we are increasing and organizing our common strength, as a shield behind which we can carry on the great constructive tasks of peace.

We believe that a world at peace contains boundless possibilities for growth and progress—for all men everywhere. But the outcome is not alone ours to determine. Until there is concrete evidence that the aggressors are willing to have peace, we must build sufficient defenses. I know that American working men and women, as good citizens, stand ready to carry their share of the effort this will require.

I know that as President of the United States I can count upon the support and patriotic devotion of labor in our effort to bring about a just and enduring peace in the world—a peace that will mean ever greater rewards not only for our own workers but for workers everywhere.

HARRY S. TRUMAN

Source: Federal Register Division. National Archives and Records Service, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Harry S. Truman, 1950 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1956-), p.604

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS ON VETO OF ESTATE TAX REPEAL
THE WHITE HOUSE
August 31, 2000**

Acknowledgments: Sec. Mineta; John Podesta; John & Margaret Sumption, family farmers; Martin Rothenberg, philanthropist & businessman, and his daughter, Sandra Rothenberg

Seven and a half years ago, when I became President, I said we needed to chart a new course for a new economy. To move forward, it would take fiscal discipline, investment in our people, and expanded trade. It would take tough choices by people in public life. And it would take more hard work by every American family.

Today, thanks to all those tough choices and all that hard work, America is in the midst of the longest economic expansion in our history. The path of fiscal discipline has led to more than 22 million new jobs; the lowest unemployment in 30 years; and the highest homeownership in history. We've erased record deficits and replaced them with record surpluses; and we've paid down more of our nation's debt than ever. This has lowered interest rates, amounting to an effective tax cut for the typical family: \$2,000 less in mortgage payments every year, \$200 less in car payments, \$200 less in student loan payments.

We have also cut taxes in ways that keep our economy growing, and help Americans meet the challenges of work and family. In 1997, we reduced the burden of the estate tax for small business owners and family farmers. This year alone, our HOPE Scholarship and Lifelong Learning tax credits will help 10 million families pay for college. Our Earned Income Tax Credit will help 15 million families work their way into the middle class. And 25 million families will get a \$500 child tax credit.

But we know there's still hard work to be done – and tough choices to be made. We know that the best way to keep our prosperity growing – and to make further progress on our national priorities – is to stay true to this proven path. Unfortunately, Congress keeps coming up with ways to run us off of that path. The tax bill they have sent me would drive us back to the bad old days of deficits and fiscal recklessness.

The majority's oversized estate tax bill is just one more element in an unsound strategy. Piece by piece, it adds up to trouble. In years past, the Republicans in Congress tried to pass one big tax bill in one quick shot – like letting loose a cannonball too heavy to fly. Well, this year, it's more like a snowball. It might start small, but it keeps rolling, and growing, and before you know it you're running for your life.

Well, today, this bill suffers the same fate as a snowball in August. Today, I am vetoing this legislation – because it is wrong for our families and wrong for our future. I will never sign a bill that signs away the prosperity, and the progress, our nation has worked so hard to achieve.

Let me be specific. I am vetoing the Republican estate tax bill because it fails the test of fairness and it fails the test of fiscal responsibility. The cost of their bill explodes ten years from today – from \$100 billion in the first decade to \$750 billion in the second – right when the Baby Boomers begin to retire, right when they start to draw upon Social Security and Medicare.

All this for a bill that would benefit only 54,000 estates each year – a mere two percent of family estates. And only a tiny fraction of that two percent are farmers or small business owners. So where, then, do most of the benefits go? More than half go to the top one-tenth of one percent of the population – 3,000 families – providing these very few people with a very large tax break of \$7 million. Not \$7 million to split among them. I'm talking \$7 million each.

What's more, these bigger tax breaks will result in smaller donations to our nation's charities. Studies show that charitable contributions will drop by five to six billion dollars a year under the Republican plan – meaning there would be less money for AIDS research or cancer studies; fewer resources for adoption; fewer opportunities for troubled children.

Meanwhile, the majority's \$2 trillion tax strategy leaves nothing for our most pressing priorities. Nothing for education; nothing for a voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit; nothing to extend the life of Medicare or Social Security; nothing in case the projected surpluses don't come in.

We can and we should pass tax cuts this year, but let's do it the right way. Let's do it in a way that protects our priorities and preserves our fiscal discipline. The Democratic plans would achieve exactly that. They would allow family farmers and small business owners to leave at least \$4 million per couple without paying estate taxes. And unlike the Republican plan, which would make them wait until 2010 to get the full benefits, the Democratic plans provide that relief immediately. The Democratic proposal in the Senate eliminates estate taxes for two-thirds of families paying them and for nearly every small business and family farm – at a fraction of the cost of the majority's plan.

So when it comes to cutting estate taxes, there's a right way and a wrong way. I've suggested a few ways we can tell one from the other. But let me give you just one more: The Republican approach gives a huge tax break to only 54,000 family estates each year. The Democratic approach, because it targets tax relief to working families who need it, leaves room for us to make prescription drug coverage available to 40 million seniors and people with disabilities.

I think we can agree which approach helps the most people and makes the most sense for America. I think the fact that John Sumption and Martin Rothenberg can agree – two men of different means, from different walks of life – the fact that these two men can agree should tell us something about the choice we ought to make as a nation.

For if we make the right choice, we can also act on our most important priorities. We can raise the minimum wage and pass a real Patient's Bill of Rights. We can invest in education and build more schools. We can pay down the debt by 2012 and keep interest rates low. We can

Remarks Announcing the New Policy on Homosexuals in the Military

July 19, 1993

Thank you very much. Secretary Aspin, General Powell, members of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Kime, to our host, Admiral Smith, ladies and gentlemen, I have come here today to discuss a difficult challenge and one which has received an enormous amount of publicity and public and private debate over the last several months: our Nation's policy toward homosexuals in the military.

I believe the policy I am announcing today represents a real step forward, but I know it will raise concerns in some of your minds. So I wanted you to hear my thinking and my decision directly and in person because I respect you, and because you are among the elite who will lead our Armed Forces into the next century, and because you will have to put this policy into effect and I expect your help in doing it.

The policy I am announcing today is, in my judgment, the right thing to do and the best way to do it. It is right because it provides greater protection to those who happen to be **homosexual** and want to serve their country honorably in uniform, obeying all the military's rules against sexual misconduct. It is the best way to proceed because it provides a sensible balance between the rights of the individual and the needs of our military to remain the world's number one fighting force. As President of all the American people, I am pledged to protect and to promote individual rights. As Commander in Chief, I am pledged to protect and advance our security. In this policy, I believe we have come close to meeting both objectives.

Let me start with this clear fact: Our military is one of our greatest accomplishments and our most valuable assets. It is the world's most effective and powerful fighting force, bar none. I have seen proof of this fact almost every day since I became President. I saw it last week when I visited Camp Casey, along the DMZ in Korea. I witnessed it at our military academies at Annapolis and West Point when I visited there. And I certainly relied on it 3 weeks ago when I ordered an attack on Iraq after that country's leadership attempted to assassinate President Bush.

We owe a great deal to the men and women who protect us through their service, their sacrifice, and their dedication. And we owe it to our own security to listen hard to them and act carefully as we consider any changes in the military. A force ready to fight must maintain the highest priority under all circumstances.

Let me review the events which bring us here today. Before I ran for President, this issue was already upon us. Some of the members of the military returning from the Gulf war announced their homosexuality in order to protest the ban. The military's policy has been questioned in college ROTC programs. Legal challenges have been filed in court, including one that has since succeeded. In 1991, the Secretary of Defense, Dick Cheney, was asked about reports that the Defense Department spent an alleged \$500 million to separate and replace about 17,000 homosexuals from the military service during the 1980's, in spite of the findings of a Government report saying there was no reason to believe that they could not serve effectively and with distinction. Shortly thereafter, while giving a speech at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, I was asked by one of the students what I thought of this report and what I thought [p.1110] of lifting the ban. This question had never before been presented to me, and I had never had the opportunity to discuss it with anyone. I stated then what I still believe, that I thought there ought to be a presumption that people who wish to do so should be able to serve their country if they are willing to conform to the high standards of the military and that the emphasis should be always on people's conduct, not their status.

For me, and this is very important, this issue has never been one of group rights but rather of individual ones, of the individual opportunity to serve and the individual responsibility to conform to the highest standards of military conduct. For people who are willing to play by the rules, able to serve and make a contribution, I believed then and I believe now we should give them the chance to do so.

The central facts of this issue are not much in dispute. First, notwithstanding the ban, there have been and are homosexuals in the military service who serve with distinction. I have had the privilege of meeting some of these men and women, and I have been deeply impressed by their devotion to duty and to country.

Second, there is no study showing them to be less capable or more prone to misconduct than heterosexual soldiers. Indeed, all the information we have indicates that they are not less capable or more prone to misbehavior.

Third, misconduct is already covered by the laws and rules which also cover activities that are improper by heterosexual members of the military.

Fourth, the ban has been lifted in other nations and in police and fire departments in our country with no discernible negative impact on unit cohesion or capacity to do the job, though there is admittedly no absolute analogy to the situation we face and no study bearing on this specific issue.

Fifth, even if the ban were lifted entirely, the experience of other nations and police and fire departments in the United States indicates that most homosexuals would probably not declare their sexual orientation openly, thereby making an already hard life even more difficult in some circumstances.

But as the sociologist Charles Moskos noted after spending many years studying the American military, the issue may be tougher to resolve here in the United States than in Canada, Australia, and in some other nations because of the presence in our country of both vocal gay rights groups and equally vocal antigay rights groups, including some religious groups who believe that lifting the ban amounts to endorsing a lifestyle they strongly disapprove of.

Clearly the American people are deeply divided on this issue, with most military people opposed to lifting the ban because of the feared impact on unit cohesion, rooted in disapproval of **homosexual** lifestyles and the fear of invasion of privacy of heterosexual soldiers who must live and work in close quarters with **homosexual** military people. However, those who have studied this issue extensively have discovered an interesting fact. People in this country who are aware of having known homosexuals are far more likely to support lifting the ban. In other words, they are likely to see this issue in terms of individual conduct and individual capacity instead of the claims of a group with which they do not agree and also to be able to imagine how this ban could be lifted without a destructive impact on group cohesion and morale.

Shortly after I took office and reaffirmed my position, the foes of lifting the ban in the Congress moved to enshrine the ban in law. I asked that congressional action be delayed for 6 months while the Secretary of Defense worked with the Joint Chiefs to come up with a proposal for changing our current policy. I then met with the Joint Chiefs to hear their concerns and asked them to try to work through the issue with Secretary Aspin. I wanted to handle the matter in this way on grounds of both principle and practicality.

As a matter of principle, it is my duty as Commander in Chief to uphold the high standards of combat readiness and unit cohesion of the world's finest fighting force, while doing my duty as President to protect the rights of individual Americans and to put to use the abilities of all the American people. And I was determined to serve this principle as fully as possible through practical action, knowing this fact about our system of government: While the Commander in Chief and the Secretary of Defense can change military personnel policies, Congress can reverse those changes by law in ways that are difficult, if not impossible, to veto.

For months now, the Secretary of Defense and the Service Chiefs have worked through this issue in a highly charged, deeply emotional environment, struggling to come to terms with the competing consideration and pressures and, [p.1111] frankly, to work through their own ideas and deep feelings.

During this time many dedicated Americans have come forward to state their own views on this issue. Most, but not all, of the military testimony has been against lifting the ban. But support for changing the policy has come from distinguished combat veterans, including Senators Bob Kerrey, Chuck Robb, and John Kerry in the United States Congress. It has come from Lawrence Korb, who enforced the gay ban during the Reagan administration, and from former Senator Barry Goldwater, a distinguished veteran, former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, founder of the Arizona National Guard, and patron saint of the conservative wing of the Republican Party.

Senator Goldwater's statement, published in the Washington Post recently, made it crystal clear that when this matter is viewed as an issue of individual opportunity and responsibility rather than one of alleged group rights, this is not a call for cultural license but rather a reaffirmation of the American value of extending opportunity to responsible individuals and of limiting the role of Government over citizens' private lives.

On the other hand, those who oppose lifting the ban are clearly focused not on the conduct of individual gay service members but on how nongay service members feel about gays in general and in particular those in the military service.

These past few days I have been in contact with the Secretary of Defense as he has worked through the final stages of this policy with the Joint Chiefs. We now have a policy that is a substantial advance over the one in place when I took office. I have ordered Secretary Aspin to issue a directive consisting of these essential elements: One, service men and women will be judged based on their conduct, not their sexual orientation. Two, therefore the practice, now 6 months old, of not asking about sexual orientation in the enlistment procedure will continue. Three, an open statement by a service member that he or she is a **homosexual** will create a rebuttable presumption that he or she intends to engage in prohibited conduct, but the service member will be given an opportunity to refute that presumption; in other words, to demonstrate that he or she intends to live by the rules of conduct that apply in the military service. And four, all provisions of the Uniform Code of Military Justice will be enforced in an even-handed manner as regards both heterosexuals and homosexuals. And thanks to the policy provisions agreed to by the Joint Chiefs, there will be a decent regard to the legitimate privacy and associational rights of all service members.

Just as is the case under current policy, unacceptable conduct, either heterosexual or **homosexual**, will be unacceptable 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from the time a recruit joins the service until the day he or she is discharged. Now, as in the past, every member of our military will be required to comply with the Uniform Code of Military Justice, which is Federal law, and military regulations at all times and in all places.

Let me say a few words now about this policy. It is not a perfect solution. It is not identical with some of my own goals. And it certainly will not please everyone, perhaps not anyone, and clearly not those who hold the most adamant opinions on either side of this issue.

But those who wish to ignore the issue must understand that it is already tearing at the cohesion of the military and it is today being considered by the Federal courts in ways that may not be to the liking of those who oppose any change. And those who want the ban to be lifted completely on both status and conduct must understand that such action would have faced certain and decisive reversal by the Congress and the cause for which many have fought for years would be delayed, probably for years.

Thus, on grounds of both principle and practicality, this is a major step forward. It is, in my judgment, consistent with my responsibilities as President and Commander in Chief to meet the need to change current policy. It is an honorable compromise that advances the cause of people who are called to serve our country by their patriotism, the cause of our national security, and our national interest in resolving an issue that has divided our military and our Nation and diverted our attention from other matters for too long.

The time has come for us to move forward. As your Commander in Chief, I charge all of you to carry out this policy with fairness, with balance, and with due regard for the privacy of individuals. We must and will protect unit cohesion and troop morale. We must and will continue to have the best fighting force in the world. But this is an end to witch hunts that [p.1112] spend millions of taxpayer dollars to ferret out individuals who have served their country well. Improper conduct, on or off base, should remain grounds for discharge. But we will proceed with an even hand against everyone, regardless of sexual orientation.

Such controversies as this have divided us before. But our Nation and our military have always risen to the challenge before. That was true of racial integration of the military and changes in the role of women in the military. Each of these was an issue, because it was an issue for society as well as for the military. And in each case our military was a leader in figuring out how to respond most effectively.

In the early 1970's, when President Nixon decided to transform our military into an all volunteer force, many argued that it could not work. They said it would ruin our forces. But the leaders of our military not only made it work, they used the concept of an all-volunteer force to build the very finest fighting force our Nation and the world have ever known.

Ultimately, the success of this policy will depend in large measure on the commitment it receives from the leaders of the military services. I very much respect and commend the Joint Chiefs for the good-faith effort they have made through this whole endeavor. And I thank General Powell, the Joint Chiefs, and the Commandant of the Coast Guard for joining me here today and for their support of this policy.

I would also like to thank those who lobbied aggressively in behalf of changing the policy, including Congressman Barney Frank; Congressman Gerry Studds; and the Campaign for Military Service, who worked with us and who clearly will not agree with every aspect of the policy announced today, but who should take some solace in knowing that their efforts have helped to produce a strong advance for the cause they seek to serve.

I must now look to General Powell, to the Joint Chiefs, to all the other leaders in our military to carry out this policy through effective training and leadership. Every officer will be expected to exert the necessary effort to make this policy work. That has been the key every time the military has successfully addressed a new challenge, and it will be key in this effort, too.

Our military is a conservative institution, and I say that in the very best sense, for its purpose is to conserve the fighting spirit of our troops, to conserve the resources and the capacity of our troops, to conserve the military lessons acquired during our Nation's existence, to conserve our very security, and yes, to conserve the liberties of the American people. Because it is a conservative institution, it is right for the military to be wary of sudden changes. Because it is an institution that embodies the best of America and must reflect the society in which it operates, it is also right for the military to make changes when the time for change is at hand.

I strongly believe that our military, like our society, needs the talents of every person who wants to make a contribution and who is ready to live by the rules. That is the heart of the policy that I have announced today. I hope in your heart you will find the will and the desire to support it and to lead our military in incorporating it into our Nation's great asset and the world's best fighting force.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:36 p.m. at the National Defense University at Fort McNair.

Source: Federal Register Division. National Archives and Records Service, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, William J. Clinton, 1993 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1956-), pp.1109-1112

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Good morning. Every day, millions of Americans
work hard to keep our economy strong and our quality of
life high.

They may serve food at the café...or check out
groceries at the store...or clean offices at night...or care
for children during the day. But they all have something
in common: they earn the minimum wage--and they need
a raise.

For more than six and a half years, my

Administration has sought to build an America that
~~rewards~~^{works} responsibility and ~~work~~^{and}. Where all our citizens
have the opportunity to make the most of their ^{God give} potential.

Where we strengthen our American community by
helping workers grow and go forward together.

We've translated those principles into concrete action
that's working for America. We now have the longest
peacetime expansion in history. 19 million new jobs.
Unemployment at a 30-year low. ^{But} as our economy
breaks records, too many Americans are having trouble
breaking even.

To help many of those families, we expanded the Earned Income Tax Credit and cut taxes for millions of hard-pressed working parents. And to honor the dignity of work, I signed legislation in 1996 that raised the minimum wage to \$5.15 an hour.

Back then, some claimed that a minimum wage hike would hurt workers and slow the economy. Well, the record is clear. The sky didn't fall—unemployment did.

Since we last raised the minimum wage, eight million new jobs have been created—including more than a million new retail jobs.

Now's the time to build on that progress. Our
economy is the strongest in a generation—our
commitment to working families ought to be every bit as
strong. Today, almost 50 percent of minimum wage
earners work full-time. 60 percent are women. And 70
percent are adults. Many are sole breadwinners
struggling to raise their kids on \$10,700 a year.

Well, no American who works full-time should live
in poverty. That's why I have proposed to raise the
minimum wage by \$1 an hour over the next two years.
This modest increase would simply restore the real value
of the minimum wage to what it was in 1982. But for a
full-time worker, it would mean an extra \$2,000 a year.

That's real money--enough for a family of four to buy groceries for 7 months or pay rent for 5 months.

Workers have kept their end of the deal. They're on the job—building our communities--raising their families.

Now it's time for Congress to keep its end of the deal and raise the minimum wage. Three years ago we raised it together; and, once again, there is agreement among Republicans and Democrats to do the same.

But that consensus won't amount to much if the Republican leadership refuses to schedule a vote. Parents raising kids on \$5.15 an hour can't afford to wait. So, I say: schedule the vote, send me the bill, and I'll sign it.

There's more we can do if we work together. There is bipartisan support on Capitol Hill for the common sense legislation passed by the Senate that keeps guns out of the wrong hands. I call on the leadership to send me that bill and I'll sign it.

Republicans and Democrats also want a strong, enforceable Patient's Bill of Rights.

Bipartisan legislation is ready to go—endorsed by more than 200 medical and consumer groups. Again, I urge the Republican leadership to schedule the vote, send me the bill and I'll sign it.

And there's one more challenge. We must secure and modernize Medicare. I have a plan that does exactly that—extending Medicare's solvency to at least 2027 and including a voluntary prescription drug benefit. I call on the congressional leadership to work with me in meeting these goals.

America's workers show up every day and get the job done.

extend the life of Social Security and Medicare and provide a voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit for all seniors. If we make the right choice, we can pass the other targeted tax cuts I have proposed – to make child care and long-term care more affordable for working families, and to open the doors of college opportunity to more middle-class Americans.

Once again, I ask Congress to work with me to cut taxes the right way – to safeguard our surplus and not squander it; to act on our priorities and not to neglect them; to keep moving forward and not to turn backward. This is a time of unprecedented prosperity, but more than that – it is a time of unlimited promise. Let's stay true to the path that got us here, and keep America moving forward in the new century. Thank you.

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Public Papers of the Presidents

March 9, 2000**CITE:** 36 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 511**LENGTH:** 118 words**HEADLINE:** Statement on **Minimum Wage** Legislation**BODY:**

The minimum wage must be raised but not with a bill that stacks the deck against America's working families. This bill repeals key overtime protections, could reduce pension coverage for many families, and includes risky tax giveaways that threaten our prosperity and the future of Social Security and Medicare. Once again, Republicans in the House of Representatives have demonstrated that they would rather fight for special interests than give working families the raise they deserve.

I will veto the bill Republicans in the House passed tonight if it comes to my desk. Congress should send me a bill I can sign: a clean straightforward bill that raises the minimum wage by a dollar over 2 years.

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playing legislative games – stalling action, stifling debate. Already, their delays have cost the minimum-wage worker more than \$900 in hard-earned pay. To paraphrase Shakespeare: they have come to bury the minimum wage, not to raise it.

For working Americans, the wait grows longer. As recently as this week, the majority in Congress was still talking about raising the minimum wage. But they couldn't bring themselves to actually do it. In the last hours before their recess, they were still working overtime to give tax breaks to the tiniest, wealthiest fraction of America's families – and still doing nothing for the 10 million people who would benefit from a boost in the minimum wage.

As members of Congress return home for their summer recess, they will meet some constituents who simply can't afford vacations of their own. I hope the Congress will keep them in mind. And if members of the majority really want to make their compassion count, they ought to get back to business – and raise the minimum wage. There will still be opportunities to pass the right kind of tax cuts – targeted tax cuts for middle-class Americans. I hope the majority will seize the moment, stop the delays, and work with me to help working families. Thanks for listening.

order may to do →

talk also not put people's money in pocket
delayed by conf.

get to work on other money policy
get this done for me +

① WAGE STAGNATION - Jake
② VERY →
③ WAGE we fast make call
④ real wage lagging behind →

~~good~~
~~good~~
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800#

Simple proposition –

for 1112 comparison delayed

Plan for increase for sub bus to grow
but rather simple tax cut

Should be 14 bill given press + set to 7 day

return in sept.

we're for this simple proposition –

How many women

making men wage

Time! Just now we see Texas law is dead
why to make men → This is just now

But this isn't a real victory with
It's on my desk + signed so far in it.
(Good - Kristens don't put dollars in people's pockets)

So 2 of 10 years.
also 100p
Sack this

delayed too long
should be put bill for pair. why

on my desk.
evidence it is -
doesn't hurt
small business

That's just
new for
the rule - 2

Minimum Wage Guidance
August 29, 2000

What is your reaction to Speaker Hastert's offer on the minimum wage?

- If at long last, the Republicans are dropping tax breaks that have blocked progress on a \$1 increase in the minimum wage, then this is good news for more than 10 million American workers. These barriers have held this bill hostage for almost 2 years. While some of these barriers still remain, the President stands ready to work with Congress on a bill he can sign.
- The true test of their sincerity will be their willingness to continue to work constructively to remove the obstacles that would still be in the way of passing a bill that the President would sign. You don't want to give a minimum wage with one hand and take away overtime protections for millions of workers with the other.
- The American people overwhelmingly support the Democratic position on the minimum wage. This movement clearly reflects that reality.

Background:

Do not say on the record.

Republicans still have attached a tax package and regulatory changes. There are a number of things that need to be worked out. Tax deductibility for health insurance, subminimum wage, the tip credit and others.

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE: A SMART POLICY FOR AMERICA'S WORKERS AND THE AMERICAN ECONOMY <i>July 28, 2000</i>

Today, in his weekly radio address, President Clinton will call on Congress to pass clean, straightforward legislation to raise the minimum wage by \$1 – from \$5.15 to \$6.15 – in two equal steps. The President first called for an increase in the minimum wage in his State of the Union Address in January 1999. Congress at first stalled and then held the minimum wage increase hostage for tax cuts that are part of a costly and fiscally irresponsible plan that would drain the entire surplus and leave nothing for priorities like an affordable Medicare prescription drug benefit. Congressional delay has cost a full-time minimum wage worker over \$900.

- **The President's Proposal to Raise the Minimum Wage by \$1 to \$6.15 an Hour Would Potentially Benefit More than 10 Million American Workers – Most of Whom Are Adult Workers.** 10.1 million hourly paid workers make between \$5.15 and \$6.14 an hour and thus would potentially benefit from a \$1 increase in the minimum wage. About 69 percent of these workers are adults (age 20 or over), about 60 percent are women, about 45 percent worked full-time, and about 33 percent are parents with children under age 18. In 1997, the earnings of the average minimum wage worker accounted for 54 percent of their family's total earnings.
- **Increasing the Minimum Wage Would Help Hard-Pressed Families Pay for Groceries, Rent, and Other Necessities.** Raising the minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$6.15 would raise the annual earnings of

a full-time worker by about \$2,000 a year. For a full-time worker, the minimum wage increase would translate into enough money to pay for nearly 7 months of groceries or 5 months of rent.

Congressional delay has cost a full-time minimum wage worker over \$900 since September 1, 1999 – the date originally proposed for the first 50 cent increase by President Clinton, Senator Kennedy, and Representative Bonior.

- **The President's Modest Increase Would Simply Restore the Real Value of the Minimum Wage to What it Was in 1982.** Raising the minimum wage by \$1 over two years would simply restore the real value of the minimum wage to what it was in 1982. This would help reverse the erosion in the real value of the minimum wage during the 1980s when, between January 1981 and March 1990, the minimum wage was unchanged at \$3.35 an hour, while prices rose by nearly 50 percent.
- **The Impact from Last Minimum Wage Increase Is Clear: over 10 Million Workers Got A Raise and Strong Job Growth Continued.** Since the last minimum wage increase in 1996/97, the economy has created more than 11 million jobs and the unemployment rate has fallen from 5.2 percent in September 1996 to 4.0 percent in June 2000, near its lowest level in over thirty years. Labor market trends for workers most affected by the minimum wage increase – including younger workers with lower educational levels and minorities – also show no negative impact of the minimum wage on employment.
- **Economic Studies Find No Negative Effect of the Minimum Wage on Employment.** Numerous careful economic studies, including ones by David Card and Alan Krueger of Princeton University, have shown that increasing the minimum wage has no negative effect on employment. Recent research has even suggested that higher wages can *increase* employment, because they increase employers' ability to attract, retain, and motivate workers. And they benefit workers by increasing the reward to work.
- **The Minimum Wage Plays an Important Role in Ensuring That All Workers Share in a Growing Economy.** In the last seven years, incomes have grown nearly as strongly from the bottom to the top of the income distribution, ending a decades long increase in inequality. In contrast, in the previous two decades inequality widened, as poorer workers saw their incomes decline in real terms. Research has shown that the decline in the real value of the minimum wage from 1979 to 1988 was responsible for approximately 24 percent of the increase in wage inequality experienced by men and about 32 percent of the increase in wage inequality for women.
- **Recent Increases in the Minimum Wage Have Helped Reduce the Welfare Caseload.** By increasing the reward to work, a higher minimum wage attracts new workers into the workforce. An analysis by the Council of Economic Advisers showed that the 90 cent increase in the minimum wage signed into law by President Clinton in 1996, and increased minimum wages in some states, were responsible for 10 to 16 percent of the decline in welfare caseloads between 1996 and 1998.
- **Helping Ensure Parents Can Raise Their Children Out of Poverty.** A working parent with two children earning the minimum wage in 1993 made \$10,563 with the EITC (in 1998 inflation-adjusted dollars)—well below the poverty line. In 1993 the President fought for an increase in the EITC and in 1996 he fought for an increase in the minimum wage. As a result of these changes, a comparably situated family in 1998 was above the poverty line – making \$13,268, a 26 percent inflation-adjusted increase in their standard of living.

Distribution of Wage and Salary Workers Paid Hourly Rates by State, 1999

	Number (in thousands)		Percent of All Wage and Salary Workers	
	\$5.15 to \$6.14	\$6.15 to \$7.14	\$5.15 to \$6.14	\$6.15 to \$7.14
Total	10,093	8,370	13.9	11.6
Alabama	202	146	18.1	13.1
Alaska	9	13	5.5	7.6
Arizona	200	157	15.2	11.9
Arkansas	130	101	20.9	16.2
California	1,463	1,023	17.4	12.1
Colorado	79	92	7.3	8.4
Connecticut	62	70	7.5	8.6
Delaware	22	21	10.8	10.0
DC	12	12	10.0	10.7
Florida	597	530	15.5	13.8
Georgia	267	248	13.1	12.3
Hawaii	47	29	15.0	9.4
Idaho	58	45	15.6	12.3
Illinois	428	354	13.2	10.8
Indiana	180	209	9.8	11.4
Iowa	103	91	11.2	9.9
Kansas	123	96	15.6	12.3
Kentucky	157	161	14.2	14.7
Louisiana	297	123	25.9	10.7
Maine	45	39	11.8	10.4
Maryland	125	137	9.5	10.5
Massachusetts	161	162	9.6	9.7
Michigan	341	312	11.3	10.3
Minnesota	115	121	8.0	8.4
Mississippi	146	74	22.7	11.5
Missouri	172	169	11.9	11.8
Montana	54	32	21.5	12.7
Nebraska	67	68	13.2	13.6
Nevada	60	60	11.2	11.3
New Hampshire	29	31	8.2	8.5
New Jersey	205	187	10.6	9.8
New Mexico	75	39	18.0	9.1
New York	566	395	14.8	10.3
North Carolina	247	223	12.4	11.2
North Dakota	34	29	18.3	15.9
Ohio	427	356	12.7	10.6
Oklahoma	170	126	19.6	14.5
Oregon	35	184	3.7	19.7
Pennsylvania	454	338	13.8	10.3
Rhode Island	37	25	13.4	9.3
South Carolina	153	116	14.9	11.3
South Dakota	33	29	15.2	13.7
Tennessee	208	216	13.6	14.2
Texas	929	653	18.5	13.1
Utah	61	84	10.1	14.0
Vermont	21	20	12.4	11.5
Virginia	218	207	13.6	12.8
Washington	180	158	10.9	9.6
West Virginia	106	60	22.2	12.8
Wisconsin	157	177	8.9	10.0
Wyoming	25	19	17.8	13.8

Note: Workers in the \$5.15 to \$6.14 category would be directly affected by a \$1.00 increase in the minimum wage. Those in the \$6.15 to \$7.14 category could be affected by spillovers.

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, unpublished tabulations from the Current Population Survey, 1999.

MINIMUM WAGE

- **A Higher Minimum Wage Will Help 11.4 Million Americans -- Mostly Adult Workers Trying To Support Their Families.** According to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 11.4 million hourly paid workers earn between \$5.15 and \$6.14 and would directly benefit from this pay raise. Over two-thirds (70%) of the workers who would benefit are adults, age 20 or over, and three-fifths (59%) are women, many of whom are trying to raise the family on \$5.15. Almost half (46%) worked full-time. And the average minimum-wage worker is estimated to bring home half of their household's earnings.
- **Valuing Work: Restoring the Value of the Minimum Wage.** President Clinton's proposal to increase the minimum wage by \$1 -- combined with the previous 90-cent increase -- simply restores the real value of the minimum wage to what it was in 1982. During President Reagan's eight years in office, the real value of the minimum wage *fell* more than 25 percent. This increase -- in percentage terms -- is in line with previous ones that helped low-wage workers without adversely affecting the economy: both this proposal and the last one increase the minimum wage by about 20 percent.
- **Helping Ensure Parents Can Raise Their Children Out of Poverty.** In 1993, President Clinton expanded the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), helping to lift hundreds of thousands of working families out of poverty. Today, with the previous minimum wage increase and the expanded EITC, parents who work full-time do not have to bring up their children in poverty. Between 1993 and 1997, the income of families with two children and one minimum wage earner who worked full-time rose by \$2,761 because of these policies. This increase will help ensure that -- as costs continue to rise -- parents who work hard and play by the rules can bring up their children out of poverty.
- **The Impact from Last Minimum Wage Increase Is Clear: 10 Million Workers Got A Raise and There Is No Evidence Jobs Were Lost.** The last minimum wage increase provided a pay raise to 10 million workers, and since the President signed the minimum wage increase into law in August 1996, the economy has created 9.9 million new jobs -- 246,000 per month; and the unemployment rate has fallen to 4.2 percent in 1999 -- its lowest level since 1969. For teenagers, African-Americans, and women, unemployment is down and employment is up.

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
RADIO ADDRESS ON THE MINIMUM WAGE
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND**

July 28, 2000

Good morning. This weekend marks the start of the summer recess for members of Congress. Of course, for many Americans, summer vacations are not an option. Millions of Americans work all summer long, all year long, earning no more than the minimum wage. I want to talk to you today about giving some of these hard-pressed Americans a much-deserved raise, and helping them live the American dream.

The face of the minimum wage is the face of America. Every one of us knows at least one of the millions who work for the minimum wage. It might be a member of your family. It might be the person who cares for your children during the day; or serves you lunch at the shop on the corner; or cleans your office every night. Seventy percent of workers on the minimum wage are adults; 60 percent are women; and almost 50 percent work full-time. Many are their family's sole breadwinners, struggling to bring up their children on \$10,700 a year.

These hard-working Americans need a raise. They deserve it. They have earned it. I have always believed that if you work hard and play by the rules, you ought to have a decent chance for yourself and a better life for your children. That's the promise I made when I first ran for President. And that's the basic bargain behind so much of what we've done in the years since – from expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit to passing the Family Medical Leave Act, from child care to health care to helping millions of Americans move from welfare to work.

That is also why, in 1996, we raised the minimum wage to \$5.15 an hour over two years. It's high time we did it again. ~~In fact, that time is long overdue.~~ More than one year ago, I proposed to raise the minimum wage by one dollar over two years, a modest increase that merely restores the minimum wage to what it was in 1982, in real dollar terms. Still, that's no small change: for a full-time worker, it would mean another \$2,000 a year, — to send a child to college, to ~~cover critical health care~~, to pay for the rent.

For a year, the Republican leadership has sat on that proposal. Back in 1996, the last time we raised the minimum wage, some of these same Republicans called it ~~and I quote~~, "a job killer cloaked in kindness"; they said it would cause a "juvenile crime wave of epic proportions." ~~Well, time has not been kind to those predictions. Neither have the numbers:~~ Our economy has created more than 11 million new jobs since we last raised the minimum wage. And study after study shows that a raise in the minimum wage is ~~good~~ ^{not only for} working families, it's ~~good~~ ^{good} for our economy - especially at a time of labor shortages, when we want to increase incentives for all Americans to find work. ~~attached Mc~~

So this time, unlike last time, the congressional majority knows better than to speak against raising the minimum wage. This time, instead of arguing the facts, the leadership is