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**THE CLINTON-GORE ADMINISTRATION:
MAKING THE CASE FOR COMMON-SENSE GUN LEGISLATION**

March 7, 2000

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"Congress has kept the American people waiting long enough. I want Congress to finish the gun bill and send it to me by the anniversary of the Columbine tragedy on April 20th."

President Bill Clinton
March 7, 2000

224

Today, at the White House, President Clinton announced the release of a new Justice Department report showing the devastating impact that gun violence has on American children. In the wake of last week's tragic shootings, the President convened a meeting with Congressional leaders to break the logjam on pending common-sense gun legislation. The President urged the leaders to act before the April 20th anniversary of the tragedy at Columbine High School to enact legislation that includes closing the gun show loophole, requiring child safety locks for handguns, and banning the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips. The President also called on the leaders to pass his plan to punish adults who recklessly allow children to have access to deadly weapons.

Releasing New Report on Kids and Guns. Today's report, *Kids and Guns*, shows that guns are the key variable in the recent rise and fall of juvenile homicide. The report contains encouraging news on recent declines in gun-related juvenile deaths, but emphasizes the need to remain vigilant in keeping guns out of the hands of children. Key findings include:

- Guns are the weapon of choice for juvenile homicide offenders. Between 1980 and 1997, 70 percent of juvenile homicide offender victims were killed with a firearm. →
- The rise in murders of juveniles and by juveniles from the mid-1980's to their peak in 1993 was *entirely firearms-related* – as was their subsequent decline since 1993. (Non-gun juvenile homicide remained constant during that period.) *increase was fire-arm related*
- Even with recent declines, too many American youth are killed by gunfire: the gun homicide rate of children under 15 is 16 times higher in the U.S. than in 25 other industrialized nations combined.

These findings underscore the importance of the Administration's efforts to reduce gun violence, including the Brady Law, the 1994 assault weapons ban, the Youth Handgun Safety Act banning juvenile handgun possession, and the Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative to crack down on illegal gun traffickers who supply guns to youth.

Pushing Congress to Pass Common-Sense Gun Legislation. For eight months, the Congress has failed to complete action on common-sense gun measures in the pending juvenile crime bill. In today's meeting, the President asked the leaders to put the safety of American families first and move quickly to enact the Senate-passed gun safety provisions, which include:

- Closing the gun show loophole by requiring background checks for all sales at gun shows;
- Requiring child safety locks for all new handguns; → *safety*
- Banning the importation of all large-capacity ammunition clips; and
- Barring violent juveniles from owning a gun for life. *

Holding Parents Responsible for Child Access to Guns. The President called on the Congressional leaders to pass his Child Access Prevention (CAP) proposal, which would hold adults accountable if they allow children easy access to loaded guns. Sixteen states have already adopted CAP laws, and a recent study shows that these laws help reduce fatal unintentional shootings by an average of 23 percent.

Leading an Effort to Develop Smart Gun Technology. The President has proposed a \$10 million FY 2001 budget initiative to fund the research, development and replication of "smart gun" technologies, which would

limit a gun's use to its proper adult owner and could prevent accidental shooting deaths and deter gun theft.