

[Acknowledgments:]

- I am so glad to be with you today as we celebrate the 31st anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid.
- The promises of Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and the Older Americans Act have fundamentally transformed what it means to grow old in America. They are a compact between our government and our people. They are a compact between generations. And, they are built on the American promise: If you work hard and play by the rules today, you will have security and peace of mind tomorrow. We can't go back on that promise.
- We cannot go back to the days when older Americans had to choose between paying their heating bills and their doctors' bills. We cannot go back to the days when Americans in nursing homes went without the vital protections they need and deserve. We cannot go back to the days when Americans had to give up their independence in their older years because they didn't have the resources they needed to stay in their own communities. And, we cannot go back to the days -- not so very long ago -- when older Americans, after years of hard work and sacrifice, were rewarded with loneliness, inadequate health care and poverty.
- Today, older Americans are living longer, living healthier and living better than ever before. And, like so many of you here today, older Americans are doing more. You are beginning second careers, volunteering in your communities, and caring for your grandchildren.
- That's why you need more support than ever before. The President has made a commitment to preserve, protect and defend Medicare and Medicaid -- for the next 31 years and beyond. These programs have lifted millions of older Americans out of poverty and have helped millions more manage to pay for needed health care services, like long-term care.
- There has been much discussion this year about the need to balance the budget to protect the future of this country. We do need to balance the budget, but there is a right way and a wrong way to do it. We cannot -- and this President will not -- renege on our fundamental obligations to older Americans by endangering Medicare and Medicaid.

[Open discussion.]

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**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
DISCUSSION WITH SENIOR CITIZENS OF GAELIC PARK
OAK FOREST, ILLINOIS
MARCH 11, 1996**

TALKING POINTS

[Acknowledgements: to be provided by advance]

- Across America, we have seen dramatic changes in the way we think about older Americans. People over 55 are younger, healthier, better educated than ever before, and beginning entirely new careers and endeavors in life as they grow older.
- We have also seen dramatic changes in the standard of living of older Americans. Since 1960, the poverty rate among elderly people has declined by 65 percent. That did not happen by accident. The social compact forged 60 years ago when President Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act has been strengthened over the past three decades by Medicare, Medicaid, the cost-of-living adjustments to Social Security, through community-based services like Meals on Wheels, and with efforts to end abuse of the elderly.
- The President is dedicated to maintaining that compact. We all have a commitment to every person still working, no matter what their age, that Social Security will be there for them and their families when they need it. Families should not have to choose between care for an elderly parent or treatment for a sick child.
- Medicare and Medicaid are examples of government that works. These programs have lifted millions of older Americans out of poverty and have helped millions more manage to pay for needed health care services, like long-term care.
- We need to balance the budget, but there is a right way and a wrong way to do it. We cannot renege on our fundamental obligations to older Americans by endangering Medicare or Medicaid.

[Open discussion]

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**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TALKING POINTS FOR ENOCH DAVIS SENIOR CENTER
ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA
JUNE 8, 1996**

- [Acknowledgments: Buddy MacKay, Lieutenant Governor;]
- I'm so glad to be with you today to hear your ideas and concerns and to talk about the programs that older Americans value and depend on.
- Over the last 60 years, the promises of Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and the Older Americans Act have fundamentally transformed what it means to grow old in America. They are a compact between our government and our people. They are a compact between generations. And, they are built on the American promise: If you work hard and play by the rules today, you will have security and peace of mind tomorrow. We can't -- and this President won't -- go back on that promise.
- We cannot go back to the days when older Americans had to choose between paying their heating bills and their doctors' bills. We cannot go back to the days when Americans in nursing homes went without the vital protections they need and deserve. We cannot go back to the days when Americans had to give up their independence in their senior years because they didn't have the resources they needed to stay in their own communities. And, we cannot go back to the days -- not so very long ago -- when older Americans, after years of hard work and sacrifice, were rewarded with loneliness, inadequate health care and poverty.
- Today, older Americans are living longer, living healthier and living better than ever before. By the year 2025, the number of people over the age of 85 is going to double, and the number of people 65 and older will go from 33 to 53 million. And, like so many of you here today, older Americans are doing more. You are beginning second careers, volunteering in your communities, and caring for your grandchildren.
- That's why you need more support than ever before. The President has made a commitment to preserve, protect and defend Medicare -- for this generation and for every generation to come. To do that, he has offered a plan that will strengthen the Trust Fund for the next decade without imposing new costs on beneficiaries. It will give people more plan choices and more preventive benefits, like yearly mammograms and diabetes self-management. It will continue our fight against fraud and abuse by building on programs like Operation Restore Trust -- which is working right now in Florida and has saved \$10 for every \$1 spent.

- The President is also committed to maintaining the guarantee to health care that the Medicaid program has provided to millions of older Americans for over 30 years. We can reform Medicaid by giving more flexibility to states without putting at risk vulnerable nursing home residents and older Americans who depend on vital home and community-based care to allow them to live independently.
- The President is also fighting hard to reauthorize the Older Americans Act and protect its vital services -- so that seniors can receive the nutrition, transportation and other lifelines they need to stay independent, stay healthy, and grow old the way we all want to grow old -- with dignity.
- These programs are important. Government can and should do its part. But so can individuals, families and communities. That's why your voices and your contributions are so important -- not only to stand for the people of your generation who built this country, but also to stand for the children who will inherit it.

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**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
AARP BIENNIAL CONVENTION
DENVER, COLORADO
MAY 22, 1996**

[Acknowledgments: Horace Deets, Executive Director, AARP; Margaret Dixon, Incoming President, AARP; Eugene (Gene) Lehrmann, outgoing President, AARP (introduces you)]

What a pleasure it is to speak to people who -- time and again through words and deeds -- have fought to give older Americans the health security and independence they deserve. Whether you are standing up and speaking out or giving something back to your communities, you are providing the glue to help keep our families together and strong. And, I am particularly honored to join you this month as we celebrate both Older Americans Month and Mother's Day.

I'll never forget one Mother's Day, when Chelsea was about four years old. We were at church in Little Rock. During the children's sermon, the minister summoned all the kids up to the front of the church and asked them one by one: "If you could give your mommy anything in the world today, what would it be?" When it was Chelsea's turn, she answered without hesitation, "Life insurance." I asked her later what she meant: It turned out she had heard someone talking about life insurance and thought it meant that you could live forever.

Actually, just before coming here, Governor Romer and I had the great honor of participating in a conference to talk about what's working for our children. All the experts were there. Not the pollsters and the pundits. But the real experts -- the parents, educators, religious leaders, business leaders, and health care providers -- and of course, children themselves. The caring adults who brush off the scraped knees and the bruised spirits and help give our children the tools they need to reach their God-given potential.

There are a lot of people who talk the talk of family values. But, we must do much more than just talk about family values. We must act in ways that value families. From infants to parents, and from grandparents to great-grandparents, we must preserve the family compact that links one generation to the next -- and carries us as one nation into the future.

As a young boy, my husband was raised by loving grandparents who taught him about hardwork and determination -- the keys that unlock the American Dream. Today, 3.4 million children live in a household headed by a grandparent. This is a tough time to be a child in America -- and it's even a tougher time to raise one. That's why I want to commend the AARP for creating the nation's

first large-scale Grandparent Resource Center -- so that grandparents who are taking on this tremendous responsibility -- again! -- have the support they need.

Right now, there's a debate going on in Washington about the role of government. But, at its heart, it's actually about much more than that. It's about our nation's soul and character. It's about what it means to be an American. And, as we approach the 21st century, it's about what kind of country we will leave for our children and grandchildren.

There are those who think that government must do it all -- and there are others who think government should do nothing at all. As always, the truth lies somewhere in between. We know that government can't raise a family -- who ever said it could? But, we also know that families sometimes need a helping hand. We know that the greatest gifts we can give our families are the inspiration and support they need to make it on their own.

We shouldn't ever buy into the false choice between balancing the budget and protecting families -- because we can do both. But, we can only do it if we work together across the lines of politics and geography and generations in a way that protects the values and priorities of the American people.

What are our priorities? Over the last 60 years, the promises of Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and the Older Americans Act have fundamentally transformed what it means to grow old in America. They are a compact between our government and our people. They are a compact between generations. And, they are built on the American promise: If you work hard and play by the rules today you will have security and peace of mind tomorrow. We can't go back on that promise.

We cannot go back to the days when older Americans had to choose between paying their heating bills and their doctors' bills. We cannot go back to the days when Americans in nursing homes went without the vital protections they need and deserve. We cannot go back to the days when Americans had to give up their independence in their senior years because they didn't have the resources they needed to stay in their own communities. And, we cannot go back to the days -- not so very long ago -- when older Americans after years of hard work and sacrifice were rewarded with loneliness, inadequate health care, and poverty.

As President Johnson said when he signed the Medicare bill 30 years ago, "No longer will this nation refuse the hand of justice to those who have given a lifetime of service and wisdom and labor to the progress of this...country."

At that time, half of all older Americans had no health

insurance. Today, almost 100 percent are covered through Medicare. At that time, a full 30 percent of our nation's elderly lived in poverty. Today, that number stands at 12 percent. Today, older Americans are living longer, living healthier and living better than ever before. [By the year 2025, the number of people over the age of 85 is going to double, and the number of people 65 and older will go from 33 million to over 53 million.] Are these important accomplishments? Absolutely. But, are they enough? No, we still have a long way to go. And, the President believes we must move forward -- together.

That's why he fought to make Social Security a strong, independent agency -- empowered to bring us into the 21st century.

That's why the President proposed legislation to help hard-working Americans by ensuring that their retirement savings stay with them when they change jobs -- and are there for them when they retire.

That's why, during the Government shutdown, he told the Congress to stop playing politics with nutrition programs for seniors.

That's why he appointed the first ever Assistant Secretary for Aging at the Department of Health and Human Services.

And, that's why he's fighting to reform our health programs the right way -- by strengthening them and controlling costs -- without turning our backs on the citizens who depend upon them. For the citizen in a nursing home, for the older American covered by Medicare, and for the 55 year-old scared to leave his job because he has a pre-existing medical condition, there is no security without health security.

That's why the President has offered balanced, tough-minded, commonsense reform. He knows that Medicare has helped lift our seniors out of poverty. He knows that it has provided high-quality health care and long-term peace of mind of all Americans. And, he has made a commitment to preserve, protect, and defend Medicare -- for this generation and for every generation to come.

To help do that, his Administration has taken major steps to crack down on health care fraud and abuse. Last year, at the White House Conference on Aging, the President announced the creation of Operation Restore Trust -- an initiative that focused our efforts in five key states. In just 12 months, with the expenditure of only \$4 million, we have saved more than \$42 million for American taxpayers -- that's \$10 saved for every \$1 spent.

Operation Restore Trust works. And, now, it's time to expand it into every state in America -- so that we can stop the overbilling and double billing that undermines our health care system and robs our citizens.

The President also understands that the best thing we can do to ease the pain of illness is to prevent it -- before it occurs. Nowhere is that more clear than with flu shots and mammography -- two cases where an ounce of prevention is worth its weight in gold -- saving precious lives and precious resources.

But, it's not always enough just to provide a service like mammography. We need to ensure that people know about it -- and have access to it. In 1991, Medicare started covering the cost of mammograms every two years for women 65 and older -- yet only 37 percent of Medicare recipients take advantage of this benefit. This is tragic, given the epidemic of breast cancer now afflicting American women and their families. That's why last May, we launched an awareness campaign aimed at women 65 and older -- to give them and their health care providers the information they need to protect their health and maybe even their lives.

Because the success of our health care programs must be measured by the health and satisfaction of those who rely upon them, the Administration has worked tirelessly to make Medicare customer friendly: Cutting red tape, upgrading the data system, and waving good-bye to the days when Medicare recipients had to wade through dozens of forms and mailings.

And, as the President works to balance the budget by the year 2002, he is making it very clear that there is a right way and a wrong way to reform Medicare and Medicaid.

His plan is the right way. It makes sound, rational and reasonable reductions in the rate of Medicare growth -- and extends the solvency of the Trust Fund for about a decade. It does not increase premiums for older Americans beyond 25 percent of costs -- and it protects low-income seniors from any premium hikes through Medicaid. It continues to strengthen anti-fraud and abuse activities. It waives the copayment for mammography -- and provides coverage every year for women 65 and older. And, it expands health care options for older Americans -- without opening the door to risky plans like Medical Savings Accounts that attract only on the healthiest and wealthiest, leaving others in more expensive traditional health plans.

Today, we rely upon the other pillar of our health care system -- Medicaid -- to provide health and hope to 37 million American women, children, older Americans, and people living with disabilities. Two-thirds of all the money we spend on Medicaid

goes to the elderly and disabled. It is the number one payer of nursing home care in this country -- and we must maintain federal quality standards and enforcement to protect our nursing home residents. And Medicaid provides vital home and community-based care that allows older Americans to live their lives with dignity and independence.

The President believes that we can provide flexibility to the states without undermining Medicaid's historic guarantee of health care for our most vulnerable Americans. His Medicaid reform proposal does just that. And that's why it has earned the support of consumers and aging advocates throughout our nation.

In 1996, health care is about much more than what happens in the doctor's office or the nursing home. It's about finding ways to provide quality, affordable long-term care in our own homes. It's about unlocking the scientific mysteries behind tragedies like Alzheimer's disease, heart disease, cancer, and stroke. It's about stopping the tragedy of elder abuse and violence that plagues too many of our citizens and neighborhoods.

And, it's about re-authorizing the Older Americans Act -- so that seniors can receive the nutrition, transportation and other lifelines they need to stay independent, stay healthy, and grow old the way we all want to grow old -- with dignity. I want you to know that the President has been fighting hard to re-authorize the Older Americans Act and protect its vital services -- from the ombudsman to the Title V Older Workers Program that, with your leadership, is helping seniors begin new jobs and endeavors all across America.

We also need to keep trying to reform our health insurance system -- so that it's there for us when we need it the most. We need to pass the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill and wave goodbye to the days when insurance companies can deny you coverage because you changed jobs or lost your job or had a pre-existing condition.

But, as you know, government will never meet these or any other challenges alone. It's going to take each and every one of us. Quite frankly, it's going to take the people who built this country, and those who will inherit it, standing together as we have always done in America to create strong families and strong communities for the 21st century.

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