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sent on 8/19 to
Include Jim D. S

JIM DORSKIND:
Please coordinate
the reply.

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sent to Dorskind

Sarah
Shuptrine
& Associates

8-15-96
THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
Received 8/15/96
VIA Fed X

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August 1, 1996

The Honorable Bill Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Clinton:

I wanted to write to let you know how very much I appreciate the leadership you demonstrated by announcing that you will sign the vastly improved latest version of the welfare legislation. Your action took a great deal of courage.

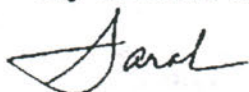
No one knows for sure what the impact will be on the children currently on welfare. There is no doubt in my mind, however, that the course you have held steady on has been the right one for the majority of children on welfare today. Your unyielding position on protection of Medicaid benefits, your strong support of child care subsidies, your commitment to the EITC, your push to get serious about collecting child support, your firm position on keeping Food Stamps from being converted to a block grant, and your willingness to step out front on the need to increase the minimum wage— all of these actions together will make the difference in whether families on welfare are able to meet basic needs while working in low wage jobs. The economic reality is that most will have to accept low paying jobs with no benefits initially and that's why these supports are essential.

I have spent a great deal of time with welfare recipients in personal interviews and focus groups over the past ten years and, as I related to my good friend Carol Rasco on many occasions, we have let them down by not supporting their efforts to work. Most want to get out of the welfare system and make a better life for their families. The key to helping them realize that goal is to stop knocking them down when they try to leave welfare (which is what has occurred through the outdated policies attached to the entitlement) and to provide help in more dignified ways such as those listed above.

You know better than anyone that policy goals can be lost in implementation. It will be critical that state actions are monitored to achieve accountability whether or not the federal government has the power to take any action to protect children. Keeping the spotlight on what actions states are taking will help those concerned with the well-being of children to be informed and to know when they need to be on top of negative developments. In this regard, I have an abiding belief that the best way to know what is happening is to talk with those we are supposed to be helping.

It is consolation to me to know that you are there at this critical time because you have always been able to look beyond the present and to interrelate issues that can't be considered in a vacuum. That is the type of leadership we must have in these times.

My warmest wishes to you and Hillary,



Sarah C. Shuptrine