

Major Legislation Affecting Children

A RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

Signed the Family & Medical Leave Act. Enables workers to take up to 12 weeks unpaid leave to care for a new baby or ailing family member without jeopardizing their job. Twelve million families have already benefited from Family and Medical Leave since its enactment.

Signed the Balanced Budget and Taxpayer Relief Acts of 1997 which included a \$500 Child Tax Credit. 27 million families with 45 million children under age 17 will receive the child tax credit as a result of the President's efforts.

Signed the Telecommunications Act of 1996 Giving Parents Control Over Children's TV Viewing with the V-Chip. Giving parents greater control over what their children watch on television by requiring the installation of screening technology (V-Chip) in all new televisions. When used with the new content-based voluntary ratings system, parents can identify which programs they want to block from their homes through the V-Chip.

Signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act Which Included Tough New Child Support Enforcement Rules. Signed into law tough child support measures that are projected to increase collections for children by \$24 billion over the next ten years. Under President Clinton's leadership, child support collections have increased 50 percent since 1992 to a record \$12 billion in 1996. Paternity establishment, often the first crucial step in child support cases, rose to nearly 1 million, almost double, from 516,000 in 1992.

Signed the Multiethnic Placement Act and the Minimum Wage Legislation Which Included a \$5000 Adoption Tax Credit -- Reducing Barriers and Increasing Adoption. Helping to increase the number of adoptions by prohibiting discrimination based on race or ethnicity, and by increasing recruitment of parents. And signed legislation providing a \$5000 tax credit to families adopting children and a \$6000 tax credit for families adopting children with special needs.

PROTECTING CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Signed the Balanced Budget and Taxpayer Relief Acts of 1997 Which Created the

Children's Health Initiative. Fought to ensure that the Balanced Budget included \$24 billion to provide meaningful health care coverage to millions of uninsured children, representing the single largest investment in Health Care for children since Medicaid was enacted in 1965.

Signed the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. Includes important new protections for an estimated 25 million Americans who move from one job to another, who are self-employed, or who have pre-existing medical conditions.

Signed the Newborns' and Mothers' Health Protection Act of 1996 Ending Drive-thru Deliveries. Proposed and signed into law legislation requiring insurers to cover at least 48 hours of a post-natal hospital stay (72 hours for a Cesarean Section).

Created the Comprehensive Childhood Immunization Initiative. Childhood immunization rates have reached an historic high. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 90% or more of America's toddlers in 1996 received the most critical doses of each of the routinely recommended vaccines -- surpassing the President's 1993 childhood vaccination goal.

Increased Head Start Funding in Every Budget. Allowing 180,000 more children to participate. Since 1993, funding for the program has increased by 43% -- in fiscal year 1997, Head Start will have serve nearly 800,000 low-income children.

Created the Early Head Start Program with the Head Start Act Amendments of 1994. Serving nearly 25,000 children and their families in 143 *Early Head Start* programs across the country.

Increased Funding and the Participation of Low-income Women and Children in WIC. 1.7 million more woman, infants, and children are receiving nutrition and health assistance through WIC than in 1993. Currently 7.4 million women and children participate.

Vetoed the 1995 Republican Medicaid Block Grant Proposal Protecting the Medicaid Guarantee for Millions of American Children. Vetoed the Republican Medicaid block grant proposal that would have ended the guarantee of coverage for up to 4 million children by 2002. And, in the 1997 Balanced Budget preserved the Federal guarantee of Medicaid's meaningful health care coverage for the vulnerable populations who depend on it, passing legislation to provide health care coverage for as many as 5 million uninsured children.

Signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act Which Supported New Efforts to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. The law requires unmarried minor parents to stay in school and live at home or in a supervised setting; encourages "second chance homes" to provide teen parents with the skills and support they need; and

provides \$50 million a year in new funding for state abstinence education activities. Because of the President's efforts since taking office, teen pregnancy prevention programs now reach about 30 percent or 1,410 communities in the United States.

PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Signed the Balanced Budget and Taxpayer Relief Acts of 1997 which included Education Tax Breaks -- like HOPE Scholarships -- to Promote Lifelong Learning.

Representing the largest single increase in higher education since the G.I. Bill, the Balanced Budget includes a \$1,500 Hope Scholarship to make the first two years of college universally available, and a 20-percent tuition tax credit for college juniors, seniors, graduate students, and working Americans pursuing lifelong learning.

Signed the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. Establishing world-class educational standards.

Signed the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994. Overhauled Title I, which provides extra help with basic and advanced skills to disadvantaged students in elementary and secondary schools. As a result of this Act, states now hold more than ten million low income students to the same high standards set for all other students in the state, and hold schools accountable for the results. The new law also provides funds for teacher training, and strengthened requirements for parental involvement. Under the Clinton Administration, investment in Title I has grown by over \$1 billion.

Signed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Reauthorization.

Expanding opportunity for disabled children with IDEA, strengthening and reaffirming the nation's 20-year commitment to disabled children and their parents.

Initiated the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund, Bringing Computers to the Classroom.

Putting the future at the fingertips of children by connecting every classroom to the Internet by the year 2000, increasing the number of multimedia computers in the classroom, and giving teachers the training they need to use technology effectively. Proposed a 5-year, \$2 billion Technology Literacy Challenge Fund to help states and local communities meet these goals, with more than \$400 million in funding in the President's FY98 budget. The FY97 budget included \$200 million in funding.

Signed the Telecommunications Act of 1996 Which Included Plans to Link Schools and Libraries to the Internet.

Fought for an "e-rate" in the Telecommunications Act which is providing more than \$2.25 billion per year in discounts for schools, libraries, and rural health clinics to connect to the Internet.

Launched America Reads in the Balanced Budget and Taxpayer Relief Acts of 1997.

Launched the America Reads Challenge, a nationwide effort to mobilize a citizen army of a million volunteer tutors to make sure every child can read independently by the end of third grade. The Balanced Budget includes a child literacy initiative consistent with these goals.

ENCOURAGING SERVICE

Signed the National Service Act of 1993 Creating the Corporation for National and Community Service. Promoting national service and providing educational opportunities -- since 1993, 70,000 have participated.

ENSURING SAFER COMMUNITIES

Signed Megan's Law. Allowing law enforcement to notify communities of the presence of sex offenders.

Signed the Brady Bill. Has already kept guns out of the hands of 250,000 felons, fugitives and stalkers.

Signed the Violence Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act. Putting 100,000 more police on the streets to keep our neighborhoods and communities safe and banning the manufacture and import of 19 of the deadliest assault weapons.

Signed a Strengthened and Expanded Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities Act.

Expanded the Drug- Schools Act into the Safe and Drug- Schools Act of 1994, making violence prevention a key part of that program. Schools use these funds to keep violence, drugs and alcohol away from students and out of schools.

Won \$195 Million in the Treasury-Postal Appropriations Bill for Media Campaign Targeting Young People with the Anti-drug Message. The Clinton Administration is funding a massive national media campaign to motivate America's youth to reject illegal drugs and substance abuse. This \$195-million media campaign will rely on high-impact, anti-drug television and radio advertisements aired during prime-time to educate and inform young people and their parents on the dangers of illegal drug use.

Signed the Gun-free Schools Act of 1994. Enforcing a "Zero Tolerance" gun policy in schools is keeping dangerous weapons out of children's classrooms. Thus far, 6,276 students have been expelled for bringing weapons to schools, and the vast majority of those expulsions involved guns.

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Expanded The Public's Right To Know About Toxic Releases. Expanded families' right to know about environmental health risks that infants and children face to help them make informed decisions about their children's exposure to these risks. Required polluters to publicly disclose information about toxic releases -- nearly doubling the number of chemicals releases reported to the public and increasing by 30 percent the number of facilities that must report under right to know.

Signed The Safe Drinking Water Act. Ensure that families have healthy, clean drinking water. This law requires drinking water systems to protect against dangerous contaminants like *cryptosporidium*, and gives people the right to know about contaminants in their tap water.

Signed the Food Quality Protection Act. As a part the President's comprehensive efforts to ensure safe food for our children and families, signed the Food Quality Protection Act requiring all pesticide residues on food will now meet safety standards specifically designed to protect infants and children. And recently, the President announces a new initiative to enhance FDA oversight over imported foods and develop guidance on good agricultural and manufacturing practices for fruits and vegetables.

CHALLENGES STILL AHEAD

- **Voluntary national education testing.**
- **Child Care Initiative.**
- **Head Start reauthorization.**
- **Adoption Legislation.**
- **Family Medical Leave Act expansion.**
- **Initiative to Attract and Prepare Tomorrow's Teachers** with the President's 5-year plan to attract nearly 35,000 talented people of all backgrounds into teaching at low-income urban and rural schools across the nation, and to dramatically improve the quality of training and preparation given to our future teachers.
- **School Construction.** The Administration will continue its push to help address the serious need for renovating and building schools nationwide.
- **The President's Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Strategy which:**
 - **Keeps kids on the right track** through anti-truancy measures, curfews, and keeping schools open late and on weekends to keep children off the streets and out of trouble.
 - **Targets gangs and violent juveniles**, with new prosecutors and anti-gang initiatives, including the authority to try violent juveniles as adults when they commit adult crimes.
 - **Keeps our kids gun- and drug-free**, by requiring gun dealers to sell child safety locks with every handgun, expanding the Brady Law to prevent juveniles convicted of violent crimes from buying guns when they turn 21, and enacting tough penalties for people who sell drugs to kids and use kids to sell drugs.
- **Comprehensive Tobacco Legislation to Protect America's Children.** Pass legislation that will build on the efforts of the nation's attorneys general, who helped create an historic opportunity for progress in reducing smoking, especially by youth, and on the President's executive action to protect our children from tobacco.
- **Continue to Safeguard Crucial Commitments to the Nation's Children** -- including continued funding for the COPS program, National Service, Head Start, WIC, and the many other education, health and safety programs -- while also maintaining the commitment to a balanced budget.