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OA/ID Number: 17510

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Folder Title:

Framing on Domestic Agenda 3/29/00 [1]

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Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. note	Notes (partial) (1 page)	nd	P6/b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Speechwriting
Terry Edmonds
OA/Box Number: 17510

FOLDER TITLE:

Framing on Domestic Agenda 3/29/00 [1]

2006-0462-F
ry583

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

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C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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Draft 3/28/00 7pm
Edmonds

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
OPENING REMARKS
WHITE HOUSE PRESS CONFERENCE
MARCH 29, 2000**

Good afternoon. I want to begin by focusing the attention of the Congress and the American people on the pressing domestic priorities that demand our attention this year.

First, let me say a few words about our on-going efforts, and those of many others, to reduce the staggering toll of gun violence in America. We have been trying for some time now to further strengthen our gun laws by passing a strong juvenile justice bill that closes the gun show loophole, requires child safety locks on all new handguns and bans the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips. But the leadership in Congress, egged on by the gun lobby, continues to stand in the way of progress. Today, we have another unfortunate reminder of that fact.

Exactly 14 days ago, the House passed a resolution put forth by Rep. Zoe Lofgren of California, that simply said, the House and Senate conferees should meet to settle their differences on a juvenile justice bill that has been languishing in Congress for nine months now.

For 14 days, the clock has been ticking, but we have heard nothing but deafening silence from the leadership. And today time runs out and still no action. Another missed deadline... another missed opportunity. It appears that the opponents of reform have run out of sensible arguments – so now they want to run out the clock.

This makes no sense. Protecting our children from gun violence should not be a partisan issue. The American people agree. All across the nation, the same message is coming through loud and clear – it is time to pass common-sense gun safety legislation and if Congress won't act, we will. Just this week, the Maryland Senate passed legislation that would require built-in locks on all handguns sold in the state by 2003. Similar legislation is moving forward in Colorado and New York. These bipartisan efforts underscore how out of touch the gun lobby and the Congressional leadership have become in opposing real reform. They also remind us that we need national legislation to keep guns out of the wrong hands in every state.

Three weeks ago, I asked the Congress to finish the gun bill and send it to me by the anniversary of the Columbine tragedy, April 20. They still have time to meet that deadline. Again, I appeal to them, for the sake of our children, stop the delay.

There are a lot of other things we can accomplish for the American people this year. We can pass campaign finance reform. We can expand health care and protect people in managed care. We can give working families a higher minimum wage. We can keep the economy growing by expanding global trade and, especially giving America's business, farmers and

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Exactly 14 days ago, the House passed a resolution put forth by Rep. Zoe Lofgren of California, that simply said, the House and Senate conferees should meet to settle their differences on a juvenile justice bill that has been languishing in Congress for nine months now. ~~It did not take a stand on the shape of final legislation.~~ It simply said to Republican leaders: If you want to oppose gun-safety legislation, then stand up and say so. But don't kill this bill with stall tactics. It's time for a public debate and action.

For 14 days, the clock has been ticking, but we have heard nothing but deafening silence from the leadership. And today time runs out and still no action. Another missed deadline... another missed opportunity ~~for the sake of our children.~~ It appears that the opponents of reform have run out of sensible arguments – so now they want to run out the clock.

Kids from gun violence should meet b.e.c. bipartisan people appeal.
~~Protecting our children. This is not and should not be~~
This makes no sense. ~~This is not a case of Democrats versus Republicans or the right versus the left – this is an issue that is at the vital center of what really matters to everyday Americans. While most of us are standing on the common ground of the future, too many politicians and special interest groups are stuck in the sinking sand of the past. But the American people are refusing to be dragged down with them.~~ All across the nation, the same message is coming through loud and clear – it is time to pass common-sense gun safety legislation and if Congress won't act, we will. Just this week, the Maryland Senate passed legislation that would require built-in locks on all handguns sold in the state by 2003. *similar legislation*
~~Bipartisan gun safety action~~ is also moving forward in Colorado and New York. These bipartisan efforts underscore how out of touch the gun lobby and the Congressional leadership have become in opposing real reform. They also remind us that we need national legislation to keep guns out of the wrong hands in every state.

~~Again, I call on the Congress: Do not be hamstrung by the gun lobby. Listen to the voice of the American people. Put the safety of our children before the safety of your seats.~~
Three weeks ago, I asked the Congress to finish the gun bill and send it to me by the anniversary of the Columbine tragedy, April 20. *you* You still have time to meet that deadline. *so ask them* For the sake of our children, ~~stop the delay.~~ *they*

the There are we can and must

If we ~~act from this same vital center~~, we ~~can~~ get a lot of other things accomplished for the American people this year. We can pass campaign finance reform. We can expand health care and protect people in managed care. We can give working families a higher minimum wage. We can keep the economy growing by expanding global trade and, especially giving America's business, farmers and workers access to the world's largest consumer market, China. We can ensure that our kids get a world class education in first class schools. We can use the surplus to strengthen Social Security and Medicare, provide a prescription drug benefit and pay down the debt entirely for the first time since 1835.

There are bills in Congress to do all of these things. Many of them are supported by bipartisan majorities in either the House or the Senate. They could be passed by both and sent to my desk tomorrow. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership ~~in Congress~~ won't bring them up for a vote because they're too busy trying to please powerful special interests and right-wing extremists in their own party.

First, to honor work and strengthen our families, we should raise the minimum wage. People who work 40 hours a week should not have to raise their children in poverty. There is not a single reasonable argument against raising the minimum again by a dollar over two years. In fact, a bipartisan majority in the House voted to do so earlier this month. But Republican leaders held that pay raise for working families hostage to tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans—tax breaks that could make it impossible to pay down the debt or strengthen Social Security and Medicare. I will veto that bill if it comes to my desk. And I say to Congress: send me a clean straightforward bill that raises the minimum wage by a dollar over two year, and I will sign it.

Second, to renew our democracy and stem the rising tide of campaign spending, we must pass strong campaign finance reform. Finally, after years of debate, a majority of lawmakers in both parties agree about this. The House has already passed campaign finance reform, and the votes are there in the Senate. But Republican Senate leaders won't let it come up for a vote. That's wrong. Let the Senate vote, up or down, on campaign finance reform. If it passes -- and I believe it will -- I will sign it.

Third, to protect the interest of 160 million Americans who use managed care, we should pass a strong, enforceable and bipartisan patients' bill of rights. If you're in an HMO, you ought to have the right to see a specialist; to be taken to the nearest emergency room; to keep the same doctor throughout a treatment; and to have the ability to enforce your rights in court. This is not a partisan issue anywhere in America. But Republican leaders in the Senate won't let it come up for a vote because the health insurance lobby is against it. I say, let everybody vote his or her conscience on the patients' bill of rights. If it passes--and it will--I will sign it.

Fourth, with 53 million children in our schools, we must make sure each one of them starts school ready to learn and graduates ready to succeed. That means investing more and demanding more from our schools. But we know that our children can't learn in schools that are literally falling apart. Today, a bipartisan school construction bill was introduced in the House that would provide \$24.8 billion in tax credit bonds to modernize up to 6,000 schools. Congress should seize this opportunity. Pass this bipartisan legislation. Send it to me. And I will sign it.

Fifth, to make sure the benefits of Medicare keep pace with the benefits of modern medicine, we must reform Medicare and add a voluntary prescription drug benefit. ~~Nobody designing Medicare today would leave out prescription drugs. Yet two out of three older and disabled Americans lack dependable, affordable prescription drug coverage. Since I first raised this issue last year, a broad, bipartisan consensus has developed across the nation and here in Washington that adding voluntary prescription drug coverage is something we can do and must do this year.~~ I call on Congress to ~~do it~~, and I will sign it.

Pass it this year

Sixth, to save the lives of thousands of young people who every year get hooked on cigarettes, we must pass legislation allowing the Food and Drug Administration to regulate tobacco like the dangerous substance that it is. The Justice Department also has sued the tobacco manufacturers to recover the cost of tobacco-related illnesses and to make sure they are held accountable for actions they take. I ask Congress to support these efforts as well – not undermine them, as some have threatened to do. There is strong, bipartisan support for the idea that the FDA should regulate tobacco. In fact, a bipartisan majority the Senate voted for the proposition before the tobacco companies and the Senate leadership killed a larger tobacco bill....Pass it and I will sign it.

When Congress adjourns this summer, we ought to be able to look back and say that we took real steps towards making America better. The issues have been decided. The American people want action. The only thing left is for the Congressional leadership to break the grip of special interests so ~~we can~~ do the people's business.

and

In this pivotal year, let's not abandon the path that got us here. Let's effect progress over partisanship. That's what the American people sent us here to do and that's what they deserve.

Thank you.

TV's White House is just too white

By DeWayne Wickham

LOS ANGELES — There's little chance that the behind-the-scene meetings Ben Johnson had here with some of the television industry's movers and shakers will ever show up in a story line of *The West Wing*, the hit NBC drama that mimics life in the White House.

Johnson, who runs the President's Initiative for One America — the White House office Bill Clinton created last year to help this nation escape the bog of our racial division — came here to argue for greater diversity in the programs that television networks air.

At the top of his list of offending shows is *The West Wing*, a well-written, artfully acted TV drama that is a painfully poor reflection of the racially and ethnically diverse staff that Clinton commands. When it premiered this past fall with an all-white cast, the show had more in common with a Klan klavern than the current White House staff.

"They quite frankly didn't know of the diversity we have in the White House," Johnson said shortly after emerging from a meeting with Llewellyn Wells, one of the show's producers. "I didn't go in there to browbeat them. I went in there to give them a reality check."

He also gave Wells some information the show's researchers had failed to uncover — or had decided to ignore.

Clinton's White House staff is the most diverse in history, Johnson explained to Wells. Fourteen of the president's 28 assistants are women or people of color, he told *The West Wing* producer.

Johnson went on to describe to Wells the kind of real-life White House staffers who don't



By Kevin Foley, AP via NBC

Reality?: Martin Sheen plays *The West Wing*'s president.

exist in the fictional world of *The West Wing*: Minyon Moore, the black woman who is Clinton's political director; Mickey Ibarra, the Hispanic who is the president's liaison with the nation's governors and mayors; Terry Edmonds, an African-American who is Clinton's chief speechwriter, and Eric Liu, the deputy director of the Domestic Policy Council, who is an Asian-American.

Show distorts White House diversity

Of course, the show's producers have a creative license to staff their White House anyway they want. But to do it with so little regard for the impact their distortion of reality has on this nation's gnawing racial problems is a troubling act of artistic arrogance. Either out of ignorance or indifference, they have created a television White House that is true to its name.

The show's lone regular black cast member (added after the show drew fire for its racial makeup) is basically the president's manservant: a young aide whose job is to wake up the president and keep him on schedule. Johnson said Wells told him he'd try to work more people of color into the program. But he made no promises.

The problem with shows such as *The West Wing* is that they are almost always created, written and produced by whites who seldom think to make minorities a meaningful part of their television world. The vast majority of these "show runners" are neither racist nor mean-spirited. But they are, creatively speaking, narrow-minded.

"Ninety-one percent of all writers of color are working on black sitcoms," Zara Buggs Taylor, the Writers Guild of America's affirmative action director, told Johnson earlier in the day, when he met with a small group of actors and writers organized by the Screen Actors Guild.

That means whites write nearly all of the other shows on television.

TV shapes real-life perceptions

It is this creative apartheid that warps the images of minorities on television and shapes the real-life perceptions far too many people cull from the make-believe TV shows they watch.

When Bill Clinton called for a national dialogue on race two years ago, he said: "We must fight discrimination in our communities and in our hearts. And we must close the opportunity gaps that deprive too many Americans of the chance to realize their full potential."

The president's hope was that a wide-ranging, open discussion about our racial problems might tear down some of the barriers that divide us. But that won't be easy if TV shows continue to perpetuate racial stereotypes — or, worse, fail to reflect in their story lines the racial progress we've made.

The West Wing has few peers. Like *City of Angels*, another gritty new drama, it is cutting-edge television. But, unlike the CBS show that uses an interracial cast to portray life in an inner-city hospital, NBC's depiction of the White House is like so many other television shows: a whitewash.

DeWayne Wickham writes weekly for USA TODAY.

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

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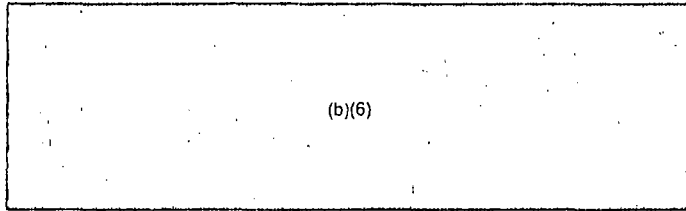
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James Allen Zou Jr.

maia
669-
9014



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Thurs April 29 - 4 P.M.

① tax credit bond

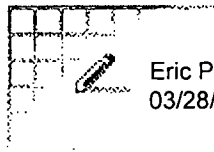
② 1.3 billion

Brian Kennedy
6-5352

24.8

est. 1st

Today a bipartisan school was
introduced - sponsored Rangel & Nancy
Johnson - overwhelming majority
in support of our bill to repair
bipartisan proposal supported by
majority of House. bipartisan
6000 schools modernization
tax credit bond proposal -



Eric P. Liu
03/28/2000 03:01:48 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Terry Edmonds/WHO/EOP@EOP

cc: Joshua S. Gottheimer/WHO/EOP@EOP, J. Eric Gould/OPD/EOP@EOP, Anna Richter/OPD/EOP@EOP

Subject: press conference intro

Terry -- For tomorrow's piece, when we get to tobacco in the litany, let's make sure to add a warning to Congress about their threats to pull the plug on our DoJ lawsuit. It's hot right now because Stevens may offer an amdt Thurs to kill funding for the litigation. There was a line in the radio address we could recycle. Give me or Eric G a call if you need to. Thanks!

Draft 3/28/00 7pm
Edmonds

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IF WE ~~FOCUS~~ WORK TO GET THINGS DONE...
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If we put progress over partisanship

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S18
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Fifth, to make sure the benefits of Medicare keep pace with the benefits of modern medicine, we must reform Medicare and add a voluntary prescription drug benefit. Two out of three older and disabled Americans lack dependable, affordable prescription drug coverage.

bans the importation of large ammunition clips, and holds adults accountable when they allow young people to get their hands on deadly guns.

My Administration is doing its part, by strengthening enforcement of our gun laws, ~~And it's why we're putting our common sense ideas to work in fighting school violence. We're~~ supporting more after school programs, more mentoring, more conflict resolution and peer mediation. Last year, we helped launch the National Campaign Against Youth Violence. And ~~last year,~~ we established a new White House Youth Violence Council -- **to coordinate the wide-ranging efforts of the federal** ~~our work throughout the~~ government.

But ultimately, this effort begins on the ground, and at the grassroots. You can reach out to troubled youth. You can help change a culture that too often glorifies violence. You can talk to your children, teach them to resolve their conflicts peacefully, and raise them with the right values. ~~What you are doing right here in Memphis, with the help of the Shelby Crime Commission, is a critical component of the campaign — investing your community resources in programs that work to reduce youth violence.~~ **I'm grateful because in Memphis, you are doing all these things.** And there's no mission more important for our nation. We can't go forward boldly into the 21st Century if our children continue to live in fear of violence. We must give our children safe streets, safe schools, and safe homes.

Your work **in Memphis** is a testament to the fundamental goodness of the American spirit, **and it sets an example I hope cities across the land will follow.** Thank you and God bless you.

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S COMMITMENT TO INVEST IN SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND MODERNIZATION

January 5, 2000

"Today too many of our schools are so old they're falling apart, or so over-crowded students are learning in trailers. Last fall, Congress missed the opportunity to change that. This year, with 53 million children in our schools, Congress must not miss that opportunity again."

-- President Clinton, State of the Union Address, 1999

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S FY2001 BUDGET DEMONSTRATES A STRONG COMMITMENT TO INVESTING IN SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND MODERNIZATION

THE FY2001 BUDGET:

- **RENEWES THE PRESIDENT'S STRONG COMMITMENT TO HIS SCHOOL MODERNIZATION TAX CREDIT BOND PROPOSAL**

The President's School Modernization Bond proposal provides \$24.8 billion in tax credit bonds over two years to modernize up to 6,000 schools. This proposal has an estimated cost of \$3.7 billion over five years, and is fully paid for in his budget. Within this program, \$2.4 billion is reserved for Qualified Zone Academy Bonds.

- **INCLUDES A NEW \$1.3 BILLION SCHOOL URGENT/EMERGENCY RENOVATION LOAN AND GRANT PROPOSAL**

This \$1.3 billion program could support nearly \$7 billion of (approximately 8,300) renovation projects in high-poverty, high-need school districts with little or no capacity to fund urgent repairs over the next 5 years. Both loans and grants would be made available, with the smaller grant program directed toward the neediest districts.

NATIONALLY, THERE IS AN URGENT NEED FOR SCHOOL MODERNIZATION

- **One-Third of All Schools Need Extensive Repairs.** One third of all public schools – about 25,000 schools – need extensive repair or replacement. *School Facilities: The Condition of America's Schools*, GAO Report Number HEHS-95-61, 1995-6.
- **Average School is 42 Years Old.** The average public school in America is 42 years old, and school buildings begin rapid deterioration after 40 years. *How Old are America's Schools*, NCES, 1999.
- **\$112 Billion Needed Just for Repairs.** \$112 billion is needed just to repair the existing schools across the nation. *School Facilities: The Condition of America's Schools*, GAO Report Number HEHS-95-61, 1995-6.
- **School Enrollment Higher than Ever.** A record 52.7 million children are enrolled in elementary and secondary school today, and this number will climb to 54.3 million by 2008. 2,400 new public schools will be needed by 2003 to accommodate rising enrollments. *The Baby Boom Echo: No End in Sight*, Department of Education, 1999.

SCHOOL MODERNIZATION TAX CREDIT BOND PROPOSAL

- This new type of bond – a tax credit bond – would provide interest-free financing to help state and local governments pay for school construction and renovation to help address issues of aging facilities and overcrowding.
- Instead of paying the interest and principal on school construction bonds, the issuer would only be responsible for repaying the principal. The federal government would provide tax credits to the bondholders in lieu of interest payments.
- The Administration's proposal would support nearly \$25 billion in bonds over the next two years to help states and districts build and modernize up to 6,000 public schools.
- President Clinton's proposal has an estimated cost of \$3.7 billion over five years, and is fully paid for in his budget.

SCHOOL RENOVATION LOAN AND GRANT PROGRAM

- The School Renovation program would provide interest free federal loans and grants to needy school districts to fund urgent renovations – approximately 8,300 renovation projects would receive funding over 5 years.
- The loan program would be targeted to those districts unable to finance the interest cost associated with facilities renovation.
- The smaller direct grant program would provide direct funding to the needy school districts unable to finance the capital expenditures associated with school renovation.
- Renovations funded through loans and grants could include repairs to roofs, climate control systems, or plumbing. Loans and grants could also fund school modernization to improve technology capability, if no other source of funds is available.



Jeffrey A. Shesol
03/28/2000 02:50:20 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Terry Edmonds/WHO/EOP@EOP, Joshua S. Gottheimer/WHO/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: Joe on the press conference opening statement

Q Tomorrow's news conference, what's the opening statement about, what's the purpose of it?

MR. LOCKHART: I expect the President, in addition to his overarching desire to spend more time with you -- (laughter) -- will use tomorrow's opening statement to go through what he hopes to get accomplished for the rest of this year on his domestic agenda, whether it be shoring up Social Security, Medicare, providing a prescription drug benefit, getting a real minimum wage bill passed, getting through permanent, normal trade relations for China -- a whole host of other issues -- gun control and those issues; and what he hopes to do in the coming months to help make that more possible.

Q Why does he feel the need to re-launch this agenda?

MR. LOCKHART: I think for the last two or three weeks we've been focused on the world at large. It's important to get Congress focused back on our domestic agenda. We're getting into April. The House of Representatives has only been in 25 days. I think most Americans would like a job like that, whereby in the first quarter they only worked 25 days. It's time for Congress to get to work. I think the President will be sending a strong message that we can get a lot done this year and we've got to get started soon.

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

Date: 3-25-00 ACTION / CONCURRENCE / COMMENT DUE BY: Mon 3/27/00 - noonSubject: Remarks Framing the Domestic Agenda

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	☒	☐	LOCKHART	☐	☒
PODESTA	☒	☐	LEWIS	☐	☐
ECHAVESTE	☒	☐	MARSHALL	☐	☐
RICCHETTI	☒	☐	MOORE	☐	☐
LEW →	☒	☐	NASH	☐	☐
BAILY	☐	☐	NOLAN	☐	☐
BERGER	☐	☐	REED	☒	☐
BLUMENTHAL	☒	☐	SPERLING	☒	☐
BRAIN	☒	☐	STREETT	☐	☐
BURSON	☐	☐	TRAMONTANO	☒	☐
CAHILL	☐	☐	UCELLI	☒	☐
EDMONDS	☒	☐	VERVEER	☐	☐
FRAMPTON	☐	☐		☐	☐
IBARRA	☐	☐		☐	☐
JOHNSON, B.	☒	☐		☐	☐
JOHNSON, J.	☒	☐		☐	☐
LANE	☐	☐		☐	☐

REMARKS:

comments to Josh Gottheimer

RESPONSE:

Draft 3/25/00 5pm
Glastris/Edmonds

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS FRAMING THE DOMESTIC AGENDA
WASHINGTON, DC
MARCH 29, 2000**

In my State of the Union address earlier this year, I set out a vision of what America can become in the 21st Century, and a roadmap of how we can get there, step by step. Today, I want to talk about the significant steps we can take this year—building on the tremendous progress we have already achieved.

Seven years ago, when I ran for President, our nation was adrift—and there was a sense in some quarters that America's best days were behind us. Our economy was stagnant, and so were wages. Unemployment and interest rates were high. And our political system seemed incapable of responding. For twelve years politicians had talked about balancing the federal budget. But over those same twelve years they had tripled the national debt. For decades they had railed against crime, welfare, drug abuse, teen pregnancy. But while they talked, things kept getting worse. There were some good ideas to combat these problems. But those ideas always seemed to get blocked by powerful special interests. And Washington politicians, rather than coming together to support common-sense solutions, were caught up in bitter partisan disputes about the role of government—with one side saying government was the ultimate source of all our problems, the other side saying it was the ultimate solution.

Vice President Gore and I thought there was a better way—a Third Way. We believed that government, rather than doing everything, or doing nothing at all, ought to be in the business of providing the tools and creating the conditions for Americans to solve problems themselves. We believed that the special interest gridlock in Washington could be overcome if politicians stopped their partisan bickering and came together in the vital center. We said: Americans should not be forced to choose between family values or government help for the needy; locking up criminals or preventing crime from occurring; high-wage jobs or global free trade; economic growth or a cleaner environment. We said those choices are false; there is no reason we can't be tough on crime and tough on the roots of crime. No reason we can't insist that able-bodied people on welfare work -- but also offer training and child care to enable them to work. No reason we can't offer opportunity for all, demand responsibility from all, and build a community of all Americans.

The American people agreed with this view. And together, over the last seven years, we have turned our country around. We've created the longest economic expansion in American history, with over 20 million new jobs and rising wages for every income group. We've turned record government deficits into record surpluses, and instead of adding to the government's debt we are actually paying it down. We cut through the special-interest deadlock and passed the Brady Bill and the crime bill, and today crime is at its lowest level in 25 years. We put progress over partisanship and passed family and medical leave, which over 20 millions Americans have

now used to care for a newborn child or a sick loved one. And we found the courage to end the cycle of dependency by ending welfare as we knew it. Now the welfare rolls are half what they used to be and millions have moved from welfare to work.

In each case, we overcame gridlock by rejecting partisan extremes and working from the vital center-- the common ground where progress in America has always happened. And now, because of the progress we have made, we are witnessing across America a revolution of rising expectations. Having seen in their own lives the benefits of reform, the American people are demanding more. Reform of our campaign finance laws. Stronger gun safety legislation. Protection for people in managed care. A higher minimum wage. Using the surplus to strengthen Social Security and Medicare, provide a voluntary prescription drug benefit, and pay down the debt entirely for the first time since 1835.

There are bills in Congress to all of these things. Most have been passed by bipartisan majorities in either the House or the Senate. They could be passed by both and sent to my desk tomorrow. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership in Congress won't bring them up for a vote because they're too busy trying to please powerful special interests and right-wing extremists in their own party. It's as if they are stuck in a time warp, fighting the fruitless battles of the past -- oblivious to the fact that the country has moved on.

I think that's a grave mistake. Those of us who hold public office draw a paycheck from the taxpayers every two weeks. We have no right to stand in the way of common-sense reforms that the vast majority of the American people support.

I think it's also wrong to fall back on the excuse that nothing substantial ever gets passed in an election year. Because this year, I think the old conventional wisdom is wrong. Just last week, Congress passed, and I will soon sign, legislation eliminating the earnings limit on Social Security. It's the right thing to do, and it shows that even in an election year--and especially in this election year--passing good policy benefits everyone.

We need to act from that same vital center to pass other important legislation.

First, to honor work and strengthen our families, we should raise the minimum wage. People who work 40 hours a week should not have to raise their children in poverty. The last time we increased the minimum wage, in 1996, our opponents said it would be a "job killer." Since then we've *created* over 10 million new jobs. There is not a single reasonable argument against raising the minimum again by a dollar over two years. In fact, a bipartisan majority in the House voted to do so earlier this month. But Republican leaders held that pay raise for working families hostage to tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans--tax breaks that could make it impossible to pay down the debt or strengthen Social Security and Medicare. I will veto that bill if it comes to my desk. And I say to Congress: send me a clean straightforward bill that raises the minimum wage by a dollar over two year, and I will sign it.

Second, to renew our democracy and stem the rising tide of campaign spending, we must pass strong campaign finance reform. Finally, after years of debate, a majority of lawmakers in both parties agree about this. The House has already passed campaign finance reform, and the

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votes are there in the Senate. But Republican Senate leaders won't let it come up for a vote. That's wrong. Let the Senate vote, up or down, on campaign finance reform. If it passes -- and I believe it will -- I will sign it.

Third, to protect the interest of 160 million Americans who use managed care, we should pass a strong, enforceable and bipartisan patients' bill of rights. If you're in an HMO, you ought to have the right to see a specialist; to be taken to the nearest emergency room; to keep the same doctor throughout a treatment; and to have the ability to enforce your rights in court. This is not a partisan issue anywhere in America. Republicans get sick just as surely as Democrats and Independents do. Over 200 medical and consumer organizations have endorsed this patients' bill of rights, and a bipartisan majority in the House passed it. But Republican leaders in the Senate won't let it come up for a vote because the health insurance lobby is against it. I say, let everybody vote his or her conscience on the patients' bill of rights. If it passes--and it will--I will sign it.

Fourth, to help stop 12 children a week from losing their lives to gun violence, we must pass common-sense gun legislation. We need to make it harder for criminals and children to get their hands on guns and reduce the staggering toll of gun violence in America. We must require child safety locks; ban the importation of large ammunition clips; close the gun show loophole, and hold adults accountable when they allow young people to get their hands on deadly guns. The American people want this. Responsible gun makers, like Smith and Wesson, want this. It's time for Congress to get this done. Send me this legislation and I will sign it.

Fifth, to make sure the benefits of Medicare keep pace with the benefits of modern medicine, we must reform Medicare and add a voluntary prescription drug benefit. Nobody designing Medicare today would leave out prescription drugs. Yet two out of three older and disabled Americans lack dependable, affordable prescription drug coverage. Since I first raised this issue last year, a broad, bipartisan consensus has developed--across the nation and here in Washington--that adding voluntary prescription drug coverage is something we can do and must do this year. I call on Congress to do it, and I will sign it.

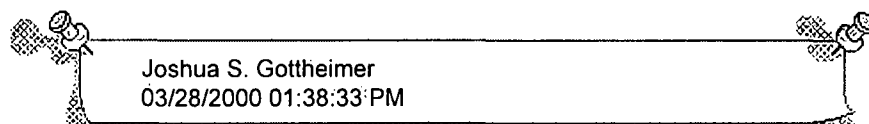
Sixth, to save the lives of thousands of young people who every year get hooked on cigarettes, we must pass legislation allowing the Food and Drug Administration to regulate tobacco like the dangerous substance that it is. There is strong, bipartisan support for the idea that the FDA should regulate tobacco. In fact, a bipartisan majority the Senate voted for the proposition before the tobacco companies and the Senate leadership killed a larger tobacco bill. Pass it and I will sign it.

When Congress adjourns this summer, we ought to be able to look back and say that we took real steps towards making America better. We ought to be able to say that we raised the minimum wage. We passed common-sense gun safety legislation. We passed a patients' bill of rights. We reformed the campaign finance system. We reformed Medicare and added a voluntary prescription drug benefit. We took action to protect children from tobacco. It is to everyone's advantage to get these things done and to no one's advantage to do nothing. The issues have been decided. The American people want action. The only thing left is for the

Congressional leadership to break the grip of special interests so we can do the people's business.

If we act from the vital center, we can do even more for the American people. We can bring more people into the winner's circle by giving businesses the same incentive to invest in new markets here in America that we give them to invest in new markets overseas. We can keep the economy growing by expanding global trade and, especially giving America's business, farmers and workers access to the world's largest consumer market: China. We can expand health care for America's children; make sure working women get equal pay for equal work. And perhaps most important of all, we can make sure every child begins school ready to learn and graduates ready to succeed by investing more and demanding more from our public schools. That is an agenda that is both vital and central to our continued growth and prosperity. In this pivotal year, let's not abandon the path that got us here. Let's elect progress over partisanship. That's what the American people sent us here to do and that's what they deserve.

Thank you.

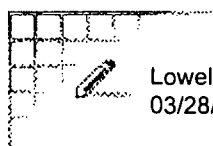


Record Type: Record

To: Mara A. Silver/WHO/EOP@EOP, Terry Edmonds/WHO/EOP@EOP, Monica K. Shelton/WHO/EOP@EOP
cc:
Subject: guns radio

TERRY -- USE THIS ONE

----- Forwarded by Joshua S. Gottheimer/WHO/EOP on 03/28/2000 01:38 PM -----



Record Type: Record

To: Joshua S. Gottheimer/WHO/EOP@EOP
cc:
Subject: guns radio

Draft 3/16/00 8:00pm
Lowell Weiss

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
RADIO ADDRESS ON GUN VIOLENCE
THE WHITE HOUSE
March 17, 2000**

Good morning. Today, I want to report to you on our efforts, and those of many others, to reduce the staggering toll of gun violence in America. And I want to implore you to make our democracy work, by making your voice heard in this critical national debate.

A month from now, Littleton, Colorado, will mark the one-year anniversary of the shooting spree that horrified an entire nation. I have met with the parents of students who were killed that day – as with the parents of six-year-old Kayla Rolland and other young schoolchildren lost forever to senseless gunfire. So many of the grieving parents have made the same plea: Please – make it harder for criminals and children to get their hands on guns.

Last year, with a tie-breaking vote by Vice President Gore, the Senate passed a bill that would go a long way toward answering that plea – by requiring child safety locks, banning the importation of large ammunition clips, and closing the loophole that allows criminals to buy firearms at gun shows. Unfortunately, the House passed much weaker legislation. Even more

disturbing, more than eight months have gone by and the Congress has taken almost no action to complete a bill.

But this week there were some signs of progress. House members from both parties voted on Wednesday to push Congressional negotiators to meet and begin to resolve their differences on this crucial legislation. This vote was a modest measure, but it sent a big message. It said to Republican leaders: If you want to oppose gun-safety legislation, then stand up and say so. But don't kill this bill with stall tactics. It's time for a public debate. It's time for action.

All across the nation, the same message is coming through loud and clear. From Colorado to Maryland to New York, Governors and leaders from both parties are moving to enact common-sense gun-safety laws. These bipartisan efforts only underscore how out-of-touch the gun lobby and the Congressional leadership have become in opposing real reform. They also remind us that we need national legislation to keep guns out of the wrong hands in every state.

Of course, no law can prevent every gun death. But sensible gun laws do make a difference. When we passed the Brady Bill, people argued that it wouldn't work because criminals don't buy guns at gun stores. It turned out that many of them did. Just this week, we received the first annual report on the instant background check system we put in place under the Brady Law – over the strong opposition of the NRA. The report shows that in its first year, the instant check system stopped nearly 180,000 illegal gun sales – and 95% of all checks were completed in two hours or less. All told, since we passed the Brady Law in 1993, we have stopped more than a half a million guns from falling into the hands of fugitives, felons, or stalkers – and gun crime is down more than 35 percent.

Another argument you'll hear is that we have to enforce laws on the books. Well, the fact is, we are. Since 1992, we have increased federal gun prosecutions by 16%. And my new budget calls for the largest firearms enforcement initiative in history.

But it is absurd to say that we must do punishment and ignore prevention. We need both. Suppose I said to you that I wanted to take all metal detectors out of airports, on the notion that 99.9 percent of the people who walk through them are law-abiding citizens who don't deserve to be inconvenienced. Suppose I said that instead of metal detectors, we should just add 10 years to the sentence the next time someone blows up an airplane. Unfortunately, that is the kind of destructive logic we are hearing from the NRA.

The opponents of reform have run out of sensible arguments – so now they want to run out the clock. We can't let them. Call your Senators and Representative in Congress. Let them know that we can't wait for action when a dozen children are dying from gunfire every day. Let them know that you want sensible gun-safety legislation by the anniversary of the Columbine tragedy. Let them hear your voice. Thanks for listening.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

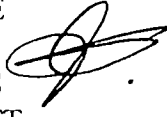
WASHINGTON

March 28, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: MARIA ECHAVESTE

FROM: J. TERRY EDMONDS
STEPHANIE STREETT



SUBJECT: REVISED 2000 COMMENCEMENT OPTIONS

Per your guidance, we have revised our recommendations for your 2000 commencement addresses. In addition to our regular working group, we have discussed the suggested universities with Mark Penn.

We propose the following two options:

OPTION I

A. COAST GUARD ACADEMY

Date: May 17
Location: New London, Connecticut
Theme: Science and Technology or
Foreign Policy Topic

B. CAL STATE, DOMINGUEZ HILL

Date: May 26
Location: Carson, CA
Student population: 13,000.
Minority breakdown: 71% overall; 31% African-American; 27% Hispanic; 12% Asian; 1% Native American
Theme: America's Culture of Violence

C. HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Date: June 8
Location: Cambridge, MA
Student population: 18,639.
Minority breakdown: 26% overall; 7% African-American; 12% Asian; 6% Hispanic; 1% Native American.
Theme: Education

Would you like to deliver the commencement addresses at the Coast Guard Academy, Cal State-Dominguez Hill, and Harvard?

Yes___ No___

OPTION II

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Date: May 26
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C. CARLETON

Date: June 10
Location: Northfield, MN
Student population: 1,856.
Minority breakdown: 17% overall; 3% African-American; 9% Asian; 4% Hispanic; 1% Native American.
Theme: Education

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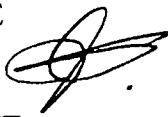
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Terms: [state legislature and gun and date aft march 1, 2000](#) ([Edit Search](#))

The Buffalo News, March 26, 2000

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The Buffalo News

March 26, 2000, Sunday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: LOCAL, Pg. 2C

LENGTH: 607 words

HEADLINE: SILENT NO MORE;
SON'S SHOOTING DEATH LEADS A MOTHER TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST **GUN**;
VIOLENCE

BYLINE: LOUISE CONTINELLI; News Staff Reporter

BODY:

Laura Davis-Jackson knew what was coming.

Her son died after being shot with an assault weapon in the Bailey-Kensington area, a city neighborhood where reports of violence were not uncommon.

But she knew that even though much of the **gun** violence happened in cities, often involving poor people and drugs, it would eventually come to the suburbs, to the people who thought it would never happen in a neighborhood like theirs, to people like them.

Davis-Jackson was right, of course. The roster of places where it couldn't happen but did has gotten longer. With it came renewed calls for **gun** control.

She's heartened by Gov. George E. Pataki's recent call in Buffalo to ban assault weapons. The governor also wants the **State Legislature** to raise the legal **gun**-buying age to 21 and mandate trigger locks, along with instant background checks at **gun** shows and ballistics records on all handguns sold in the state.

"This is not a **gun** issue, it's a human issue," she said. "When your state picks up on it, it has much more impact."

It's too late for her son, former Lafayette High School basketball player Torry Jackson. But she hopes the proposed ban saves others.

Since her son was gunned down in August 1991 by a man armed with an AK-47, on the corner of Bailey and East Delavan avenues, just a few blocks from his home, Davis-Jackson has been on a mission.

She has marched against **gun** violence in Washington, D.C., bringing her son's black, size-10 Nikes with his picture attached, to join tens of thousands of other empty shoes on the steps of the nation's

Capitol. She founded the group Dealing Effectively After the Homicide with mothers who have similarly lost their children and who speak out against violence. Their motto: "We will not be silent anymore about the conditions that exist within our city or about the violence that has run rampant and taken the lives of our loved ones forever."

Days before the Columbine High School killings, she told an Amherst symposium that about 1 million students a year bring a **gun** to school.

To help boost his stamina for basketball and strengthen his legs, Torry Jackson would jog from the Delavan-College Metro Rail station on Main Street to his home miles away.

Near the bright lights of a hot dog stand, more than 20 bullets tore into Jackson's lower torso, arms and legs.

Erie County Judge Michael L. D'Amico, who called the killing of Torry Jackson "barbaric," ordered the killer, Valentino "Tino" Dixon, to serve consecutive prison terms of almost 40 years to life for the murder, two unrelated 1991 shootings and a drug conviction.

"What a waste of precious life, incomplete dreams, talents gone as fast as you can blink," said his mother. "Violence shattered our lives. Once you lose your child, you live with death every day."

As Davis-Jackson told a Children's Hospital conference audience not long ago, her son knew he was in danger: "We were discussing how the community was changing, and there was hardly any place for youth his age to go.

"I have watched how families depended on each other, how neighbors looked out for each other. Children were left in day care because both mother and father had to work to meet their family responsibilities. And all the while, right before our eyes, before we knew it, there was an influx of **guns** everywhere and the fear overtook the friendly smiles you used to see, and neighbors began to lock their doors, and programs shut down, and police stopped walking the beat, and schools hired security guards."

Laura Davis-Jackson knew it would get worse. Now she hopes she gets the chance to see it get better.

GRAPHIC: JAMES P. McCOY/Buffalo News; Laura Davis-Jackson at the corner where her son Torry was gunned down on Aug. 10, 1991. Now an advocate of **gun** control, she still wears his picture on a lapel button.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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The Salt Lake Tribune, March 27, 2000

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The Salt Lake Tribune

March 27, 2000, Monday

SECTION: Final; Pg. B2

LENGTH: 764 words

HEADLINE: Fight Over **Guns** Returns to State Capitol ; Supporters stage rally as part of petition drive aimed at banning firearms from school campuses, churches

BYLINE: MICHAEL VIGH and JUDY FAHYS, THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

BODY:

About 100 people gathered at the state Capitol on Saturday to promote a cause lawmakers refused to support: outlawing virtually all **guns** in schools, universities and places of worship.

"The **state Legislature** failed to protect our families from weapons in schools and churches; it is now up to the people of Utah to act where our elected representatives failed," said Rep. Dave Jones, D-Salt Lake City. "This is a common-sense safety issue that has built up momentum of historic proportions."

The "Utah Safe to Learn -- Safe to Worship" act had so little support among state lawmakers, it failed to advance out of committee during the past Legislature. That only solidified the conviction behind the signature drive mounted by a coalition of clergy, educators and parents -- all of them being led by the 176,000-member Utah PTA. The drive is also backed by former U.S. Sen. Jake Garn, R-Utah, and Utahns Against **Gun** Violence.

If supporters gather at least 68,000 signatures, voters in November would have the chance to circumvent lawmakers.

The ballot would include a question asking whether or not they want to enact a law directly that would outlaw people, including those with concealed-firearm permits, from carrying **guns** in primary and secondary schools, institutions of higher education and places of worship. It offers exceptions for law enforcement officers, people who obtain prior consent from an authorized representative of a school or place of worship and firearms that are securely stored inside an unoccupied vehicle or carried by a person transporting a student to or from school.

The initiative's opponents plan to counter the signature drive by talking to neighbors, writing letters-to-the-editor and otherwise challenging support for the ban.

"It's simply a matter of education," said Scott Engen, public policy director for **Gun** Owners of Utah, a **gun**-rights group. "The more this process goes on and the more people know about what this initiative does, the less support it will have."

While supporters of the measure say the presence of firearms in schools and churches erodes the atmosphere of safety and makes **guns** more available, opponents say there is no reason to restrict the 30,000 people who have undergone the background checks, fingerprinting and safety training required of Utahns who have permits to carry concealed weapons. Their argument -- and their political clout -- had a critical role in stopping new **gun** controls discussed last summer and during the recently concluded legislative session.

But rally attendees Saturday insisted their cause has widespread support throughout Utah. The crowd included PTA moms, churchgoers, health professionals and others. Speakers included the Rev. John Norman of Judge Memorial High School and Bountiful High School's Liz Thornell of Utah Safe Students.

"I have never seen such a diverse and committed group of volunteers come together on one issue," said Jones, who was sponsor of the bill that failed in the most recent legislative session.

"Our children have a right to have an education free of fear," said Patti Edwards, wife of Brigham Young University head football Coach LaVell Edwards.

Initiative supporters say they want to address the problem of accessibility of **guns**. They point to national statistics that show more than 2,300 children have died in the United States from unintentional shootings in the past decade. They also note that at Primary Children's Medical Center, 78 children were admitted with gunshot wounds between 1990 and 1997, and 14 of them died.

The initiative campaign released results of a January opinion poll of 504 likely voters that showed nearly two-thirds of Utahns back the ballot initiative. It showed 65 percent favor the initiative, while 24 percent opposed it and 11 percent were uncertain. The poll revealed no significant splits between rural and urban voters, Democrats and Republicans or members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

That level of support reflects some erosion from early last year, when about 90 percent of Utahns said they supported a **gun** ban in schools and places of worship.

The coalition handed out about 50 petitions at the rally, said Kim DeMille, campaign director for the initiative. Volunteers also began handing out petitions from Cache County to Washington County on Saturday, she said. Thousands already are in circulation.

The coalition also established a toll-free number for petition inquiries. Registered voters who are interested should dial (877) 406-0835 for information.

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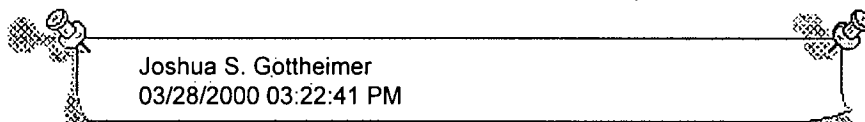
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Record Type: Record

To: Terry Edmonds/WHO/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: draft bridge

Draft 03/28/00 3pm

Gottheimer/Silver

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
VIDEOTAPED REMARKS FOR LAREDO WORLD TRADE BRIDGE
LAREDO, TX
March 28, 2000**

I am so glad to have this opportunity to join you in celebrating the completion of the Laredo World Trade Bridge. There is no better symbol of our commitment to improving and strengthening our partnership with Mexico.

Thanks in large part to the NAFTA Agreement our Administration worked so hard to pass, ^{we are} ~~we have~~ opened our borders to the people of Mexico, bringing new trade and new jobs to American businesses and workers. Since 1994, nearly one-third of all US-Mexican trade has passed through Laredo, making it the busiest port on the US-Mexican border. In fact, more than 2 million trucks – nearly 8,000 every day -- cross through Laredo every year. So, ^{that} we all know this bridge does much more than connect Laredo to Nuevo Laredo. It is a powerful symbol of continued economic growth and prosperity for the City of Laredo, the State of Texas, and for our nation.

^{also} ~~where~~ The people of South Texas know better than most that our neighbors are not just the people that live next door. That's why this is a bridge of cultures – connecting two countries, with a common history and a shared heritage. And it never would have been built without the hard work and determination of Mayor Betty Flores, Mayor Saul Ramirez, and Governor Ann Richards, who literally walked the permit through the state and federal approval process.

^{that} President Franklin Roosevelt once said, "[A] bridge stands as an open door." The Laredo World Trade Bridge is exactly that. One will bring new trade, prosperity, and shared culture to the people of the United States and Mexico. Thank you for your vision, dedication, and energy. ~~Congratulations~~

important bridge to the 21st century. building that this

workers access to the world's largest consumer market in China. We can ensure that our kids get a world class education in first class schools. We can use the surplus to strengthen Social Security and Medicare, provide a prescription drug benefit and pay down the debt entirely for the first time since 1835.

There are bills in Congress to do all of these things. Many of them are supported by bipartisan majorities in either the House or the Senate. They could be passed by both and sent to my desk tomorrow. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership won't bring them up for a vote because they're too busy trying to please powerful special interests and right-wing extremists in their own party.

First, to honor work and strengthen our families, we should raise the minimum wage *by a dollar over two years.* ~~People who work 40 hours a week should not have to raise their children in poverty. There is not a single reasonable argument against raising the minimum again by a dollar over two years. In fact,~~ a bipartisan majority in the House voted to do so earlier this month. But Republican leaders held that pay raise for working families hostage to tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans—tax breaks that could make it impossible to pay down the debt or strengthen Social Security and Medicare. I will veto that bill if it comes to my desk. And I say to Congress: send me a clean straightforward bill that raises the minimum wage by a dollar over two year, and I will sign it.

Second, to renew our democracy and stem the rising tide of campaign spending, we must pass strong campaign finance reform. ~~Finally, after years of debate, a majority of lawmakers in both parties agree about this.~~ The House has already passed campaign finance reform, and the votes are there in the Senate. But Republican Senate leaders won't let it come up for a vote. That's wrong. Let the Senate vote, up or down, on campaign finance reform. If it passes -- and I believe it will -- I will sign it.

Third, to protect the interest of 160 million Americans who use managed care, we should pass a strong, enforceable and bipartisan patients' bill of rights. ~~If you're in an HMO, you ought to have the right to see a specialist; to be taken to the nearest emergency room; to keep the same doctor throughout a treatment; and to have the ability to enforce your rights in court.~~ This is not a partisan issue anywhere in America. But Republican leaders in the Senate won't let it come up for a vote because the health insurance lobby is against it. I say, let everybody vote his or her conscience on the patients' bill of rights. If it passes--and it will--I will sign it.

Fourth, with 53 million children in our schools, we must make sure each one of them starts school ready to learn and graduates ready to succeed. ~~That means investing more and demanding more from our schools.~~ But we know that our children can't learn in schools that are literally falling apart. Today, a bipartisan school construction bill was introduced in the House that would provide \$24.8 billion in tax credit bonds to modernize up to 6,000 schools. Congress should seize this opportunity. Pass this bipartisan legislation, ~~Send it to me.~~ And I will sign it.

Fifth, to make sure the benefits of Medicare keep pace with the benefits of modern medicine, we must reform Medicare and add a voluntary prescription drug benefit. Two out of three older and disabled Americans lack dependable, affordable prescription drug coverage.

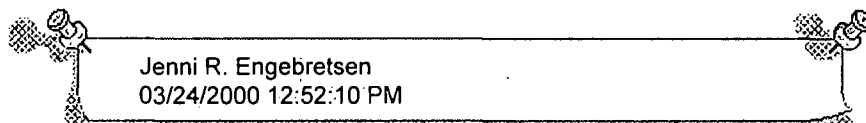
Since I first raised this issue last year, a broad, bipartisan consensus has developed in support of it. I call on Congress to pass it this year, and I will sign it.

Sixth, to save the lives of thousands of young people who every year get hooked on cigarettes, we must pass legislation allowing the Food and Drug Administration to regulate tobacco like the dangerous substance that it is. There is strong, bipartisan support for the idea that the FDA should regulate tobacco. Pass it and I will sign it.

The Justice Department also has sued the tobacco manufacturers to recover the cost of tobacco-related illnesses and to make sure they are held accountable for actions they take. I ask Congress to support these efforts as well – not undermine them, as some have threatened to do.

When Congress adjourns this summer, we ought to be able to look back and say that we took real steps towards making America better. The issues have been decided. The American people want action. The only thing left is for the Congressional leadership to break the grip of special interests and do the people's business.

Thank you.



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Subject: EMBARGOED for 3/25/00: Radio Address by the President to the Nation

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Mumbai, India)

Embargoed For

Release

Until 10:06 A.M. EST

Saturday, March 25, 2000

RADIO ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATION

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. As I reach the end of my terrific week in South Asia and prepare to return home, I want to talk to you this morning about the greater challenge we now face to keep our children safe from the dangers of tobacco. Every single day another 3,000 American children smoke their first cigarette. Most of them will be hooked for life, and a third of them will die earlier as a result.

That's why our administration has worked so hard to highlight the health threat teen smoking poses and to keep tobacco products out of the hands of our children. We supported state and local efforts to stop underage smoking before it starts. And we know these efforts work. Massachusetts has used education programs to reduce high school student smoking by 15 percent. Oregon cut eight-grader smoking rates by almost a third in just one year.

Five years ago we asked the Food and Drug Administration to start a campaign to slash teen smoking in every state and to treat nicotine like the dangerous drug it is. The FDA wrote strong effective rules to prevent any child under 18 from buying any tobacco product anywhere in the United States. The FDA was also prepared to end tobacco advertising that is shamelessly aimed at addicting another generation of our young people.

This effort had strong support from public health leaders in both parties in Congress, but it collapsed under the pressure of tobacco companies and the Republican leadership in Congress while the tobacco industry challenged the rules in court.

This week in a setback for the health of our children, the Supreme Court ruled that the FDA must have explicit authorization from Congress before it can regulate tobacco. However, all nine justices made it perfectly clear that they believe tobacco is dangerous, especially to young people. The majority opinion called it -- quote -- "perhaps the most significant threat to health in the United States."

Now, the American people know this. They've known it for a long time. Now the ball is in Congress' court. They should how they also understand the danger to our young people and give the FDA's tobacco regulations the force of law.

This is not a partisan issue. It's a health issue for our nation and a life-or-death issue for children. In 1998, a bipartisan group of senators offered legislation that would have let the FDA's campaign move forward. It had the support of 57 senators from both sides of the aisle, but the leadership blocked it. And this week, similar bipartisan legislation was introduced in the House. I urge both Houses of Congress to pass it promptly.

The Justice Department also has sued the tobacco manufacturers to recover the cost of tobacco-related illnesses and to make sure they're held accountable for actions that they take. I ask Congress to support these efforts as well -- not undermine them, as some have threatened to do.

I also ask Congress to work with me to take action to protect the financial security of tobacco farmers and their communities. And finally, I challenge the states to do their part as well, by dedicating the money they've collected from tobacco settlements to fund anti-smoking programs for children and young people.

Preventing our children from smoking is our common responsibility. It's a fight we can win and one we must win, starting now.

Thanks for listening.

END

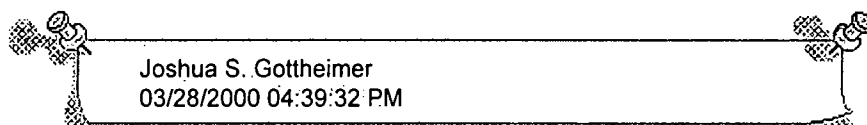
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Record Type: Record

To: Terry Edmonds/WHO/EOP@EOP

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Draft 03/28/00 4:15pm
Gottheimer/Silver

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
VIDEOTAPED REMARKS FOR NATIONAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST YOUTH VIOLENCE
MEMPHIS, TN
April 14, 2000

Good evening. I am so pleased to join you today, as the National Campaign Against Youth Violence kicks off its City-by-City tour. Seven years ago, I had the honor to speak at the Church of God in Christ there in Memphis. That morning I spoke about the awful toll of youth violence and gun crime in our communities. I said that day, "Unless we deal with the ravages of crime and violence...none of the other things we seek to do will ever take us where we need to go."

Together, we have come a long way. With our strategy of putting more cops on the beat and getting more guns off the street, overall crime has fallen for the seventh year in a row. The juvenile violent crime arrest rate is the lowest in ten years. And with 100,000 new community police officers and the Brady law, we have kept guns out of the hands of half a million felons, fugitives and stalkers.

But while we have made great progress, one act of violence is still one too many. Nearly a year has passed since the awful tragedy at Columbine – and gunfire continues to take the lives of nearly a dozen young people a day.

If we're going to make America the safest big country on earth, all of us have a responsibility to act. Congress has to do its part, by sending me common-sense gun legislation that: mandates child safety locks, closes the gun show loophole, bans the importation of large ammunition clips, and holds adults accountable when they allow young people to get their hands on deadly guns.

My Administration is doing its part, by strengthening enforcement of our gun laws, supporting more after school programs, more mentoring, more conflict resolution and peer mediation. Last year, we helped launch the National Campaign Against Youth Violence. And, we established a new White House Youth Violence Council -- to coordinate the wide-ranging efforts of the federal government.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 7, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ON GUN LEGISLATION

The James S. Brady Press Briefing Room

12:40 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon. Given what I want to talk about today, it seems fitting that I am speaking to you in the briefing room we have just named for Jim Brady.

Last spring, the brutal shootings and Columbine gave a life and death urgency to the call for strengthening our nations gun laws. The Senate responded to that call, in spite of fierce pressures by the gun lobby. With a tie-breaking vote by the Vice President, the Senate passed an amendment to close the gun show loophole and pass other common-sense provisions that require child safety locks and ban the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips.

Unfortunately, the House narrowly defeated the McCarthy amendment to close the gun show loophole, and passed a much weaker bill than the Senate did. Now, for the past eight months, the leaders in Congress have done virtually nothing to complete a final bill.

That's why I called upon Senators Hatch and Leahy, and Representatives Hyde and Conyers to come to the White House this morning. I met with them in the Oval Office for nearly an hour. We had a very good discussion. My message was simple: 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, April 20th.

In the meeting this morning, I told the leaders the final bill needs to close the loophole that allows criminals to buy firearms at gun shows, without opening any new loopholes in the process.

I said I wanted a ban on the importation of ammunition clips that allow shooters, including those in Littleton, to spray bullets across a wide killing zone in a matter of seconds. And I said a final bill needs to require child safety locks, and should hold adults accountable when they allow young people to get their hands on deadly guns -- two measures that are particularly relevant in light of the heartbreaking shooting of Kayla Rolland last week.

I know the gun lobby is cranking up pressure on Congress again. But when first graders shoot first graders, it's time for Congress to do what's right for America's families.

All four members of Congress I met with this morning expressed their desire to work with us in good faith. I'm grateful for their willingness to meet with me today and to continue working together. But let's be clear here: Eight months is long enough. There's no more time for delay. The conference committee should meet and work out their differences, and send me a good bill. We owe it to our children and to the victims to get this done by April the 20th.

When I talk to the parents of victims, they just can't understand why people in Washington are always talking about what we can't do instead of what we can do. I'm not interested in talking about how little we can do. I'm interested in how much we can accomplish to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children.

Thank you.

Q Mr. President, did you get any kind of commitment from the leaders --

Q Mr. President, if Congress --

THE PRESIDENT: I'll take both of them.

Q If the congressional leaders and the gun lobby were not swayed after the Columbine shooting, what makes you feel that the time is, so to speak, more right now?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, how many more people have to get killed before we do something? I mean, we had a pretty rough week last week.

And let me say, one of the things that I did in preparation for this -- because, as you know, before last week we were pushing to try to get a conference on the juvenile justice bill -- I actually read the proposal made by Mr. Hyde on this subject, and the counterproposal made by Mr. Conyers. And the Conyers proposal, I think, is workable, and would keep -- would go a very long way toward, in fact, closing the gun show loophole. The Hyde proposal is a substantial movement away from just the total, what you might call the complete NRA position.

So I think that if we could get a conference meeting, and they could start working on the things everybody agrees on, and get these two leaders to work through this, and give us a provision that would actually work -- there's more than one way to do this; we need something that will actually work -- I think that it's quite possible that that could occur.

Keep in mind, there's a reason that there's such an effort to keep this conference from meeting. I think they know now that if a bill came out that had a reasonable gun show provision, loophole provision, in it that actually closes the loophole, that it would pass the House and the Senate and -- because the American people want it.

So we can't pretend that it's not the same as defeating the bill just to never have the conference meet. The conference needs to meet. And what I believe will happen is that you will have more talking and more thinking, and less shouting, if the conference committee will meet. That's what Congress hires on to do, to write laws. And I think it's very important that this be

done. And I hope that the conference committee will meet soon. And I believe that there's a way to work through this that will satisfy some of the practical concerns that people who are interested in the gun shows have, and still allow us to have an air-tight guarantee that we're going to keep the guns away from the criminals and the other categories of people covered by the Brady law.

Yes, Terry?

Q Mr. President, did you get any commitment from the Republicans today that they would actually have a meeting, that there would be a conference? And would you be willing to accept any bill that did not include the gun show background check?

THE PRESIDENT: First of all, where we left it was that -- I think that Leahy, Conyers and Hyde, I believe, are willing to start the conference -- I believe that. I don't want to speak for Mr. Hyde, but I think that's accurate. I believe that -- Senator Hatch said that he thought he had to go back and consult with the Republican leadership and the members of the caucus, and he would try to give us an answer in the next little bit here.

I think that Senator -- I mean, Mr. Conyers said he would work with Mr. Hyde to try to work out the gun show issue, but he didn't want to do that as a way of putting off the conference, and I agree with that. He said he thought we ought to have a conference; the conference ought to approve everything else, including the child trigger locks, the ammunition clip ban -- which is a big issue in view of some of the other things that have happened here lately -- and these other issues, and that, meanwhile, he would work with Mr. Hyde to try to work through this.

Now, all I can tell you is I think it would be a big mistake for Congress not to close the gun show loophole. Keep in mind -- let's everybody remember this -- one of the principal arguments used against the Brady Bill when we passed that and I signed it was that criminals don't buy guns at gun stores, they buy guns at gun shows. You go back and look at the debate. And one of the things they said, oh, the criminals don't buy -- they either get them on one-on-one sales or they get them at these gun shows or urban flea markets.

Well, it turned out that was wrong. We've had almost a half-million gun sales not approved through gun stores. But the same people who were telling us seven years ago, or six and seven years ago, that we didn't need the Brady Bill because all the criminals were buying their guns at gun shows now tell us we can't stop the criminals from buying guns at gun shows. I mean, I think it's very important to understand, there are people's lives at stake here. This will save lives.

Now, people that are very solicitous and understanding of all the sort of practical problems for these rural gun shows -- I'm telling you, there are ways to work through that. I've actually been to these rural gun shows. I know what they look like. I understand what these people are saying. I'd been to them when I was governor, I know -- you have something off in a field in the country and you've got all the pickups and the cars opened up, and 2,000 or 3,000 people come through in a day -- I understand that. We have the technology to do the background

checks and we can do it, and we can do it without shutting these things down and all the law-abiding people that are involved in them down.

But if we act like because there are practical problems, we're just not going to save these people's lives and we're going to let all these criminals buy guns, I think that is, to me, it's unconscionable to walk away from that.

Q When you meet with the mother of the Michigan child this afternoon, do you think that you can reasonably assure her that there will be a bill this year? And secondly, can you make that kind of commitment knowing that there are as many Democrats as Republicans needed still to get support for something like this?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, I don't think that is true. I think that if -- among the Democrats that voted for Mr. Dingell's bill, I think if some practical changes were made in the law which would not undermine the ability of the checks to actually keep guns out of hands of criminals and felons, fugitives and stalkers, I think that most of the Democrats would vote for that bill. And I think a lot of Republicans would, and I believe it would pass. So that's what I believe would happen.

Now, what I'm going to tell her when I see her, first of all, is that as a parent my heart goes out to her, and as President I'm going to do everything I can to see that it doesn't happen to other children. That's all I can do.

I can't -- do I know whether the Republicans will permit a bill to pass this year, or whether they will be willing to stand up to the NRA? No, I don't know that. But I think that if we could get a bill out of that committee that was a good bill, this year I think it would pass. And I think that may be what is going on now. That may be why there's so much pressure on Senator Hatch not to call a meeting.

But that is no way to do it. They ought to vote, vote up or down, declare themselves. If they don't want this bill to pass, they shouldn't be ashamed to tell America they don't want it to pass. And if they do, they ought to get together and pass it.

Q Mr. President, regarding your trip to India, there are now reports that you will make a brief stop in Pakistan. Are those reports true?

THE PRESIDENT: I should have an announcement on that probably within a day. I'm working that and we're about to finalize the arrangements, and as quickly as I know -- as I can do so, when I finish the calls I'm making, I'll be glad to release that.

Q Mr. President, aid to Colombia is facing problems in the Congress of the United States. There are some people who doubt -- they think it might be another Vietnam. Some people think that the military aid will end up in violation of human rights and talks of collusion between the military and paramilitary forces. What are you doing to try to get this aid passed that Colombia has been waiting for a long time and you've been pushing for a long time?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I still believe the package will pass. I think the questions which are being asked are legitimate questions, and should be asked. If I were a member of Congress and I just heard the administration were to give this amount of money to Colombia and it was generally going to be used to fight drugs and do some other things, I would ask the same questions.

But all I can tell you is that it's not like Vietnam in the sense that we are not making a commitment to train soldiers in a way that we will then be called upon to come in and replace them or fight with them or work with them. This is to deal with a guerrilla war, which is what happened in Vietnam.

In this case, we will be using some of the funds to train soldiers to support police officers who will be doing antinarcotics work. And the units that will be involved in this will have to be particularly vetted to make sure that they don't have the pattern of abuse that you referred to.

So we have worked as hard as we could to do this. Now, can I tell you that there will never be a dollar of this that would be spent in a way that I wouldn't want. Nobody can say that. But I can say this: I think that we're a lot better off trying to help stabilize Colombia and save democracy there, and help them fight narcotics there and keep more drugs out of this country, than if we walk away from it. I think the consequences, if we walk away, are pretty clear. And if we help them, we just might make it and turn the situation around. That's what I think we ought to try to do.

Mary.

Q Mr. President, the argument is made that the bill under consideration, all the other bills would not have prevented either Columbine or what happened in Flint. Have you ever considered advocating abolition of handguns, as advocated by the late Senator John Chafee, who spoke of the insanely easy access to guns in this country?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think, first of all, I'm not sure that's true. I just have a statement here by the young woman that bought the guns used at Columbine, and she said, "I wish it had been more difficult. I wouldn't have helped them buy the guns if I had faced a background check."

So, first of all, this works. And I also believe we should license handgun owners and when they buy guns, I think they ought to have to pass a Brady background check and show they've taken a safety course. I think we should do more than we're doing. But I believe that it is best for me as President to focus on what we can get done to save lives.

John Chafee, as you know, was a wonderful man and an aberration in the present Republican Senate Caucus. But I don't think there would be many votes for that in the Congress. And what I should be doing is trying to pass the strongest possible legislation I can pass to save the largest number of lives I can save.

I do believe, Mary, if we -- one of the things that we ought to do if we can get this legislation on the books is to be much more aggressive in these gun buy-back programs, as well, to try to reduce the total stock out there of the kind of loose guns that are running around. I mean, when you hear over 200 million guns are held in America, it's trembling -- it's a staggering figure. But a lot of them are held by collectors and hunters and others with big supplies who are responsible people. But if we had, I'm convinced if we had a more aggressive use of gun buy-back programs, we could draw down a lot of these guns that are used in crimes.

Q Page one of the usually reliable Washington Post reports this morning that you regularly --

THE PRESIDENT: Is that an editorial comment?

Q -- you regularly advise the campaign of Vice President Gore. Did you advise Mr. Gore to allow no media questions for the past 17 days, particularly because of the Maria Shaw case, including Gore's appearance in Buffalo on Saturday, where I found that the gymnasium was one-third empty, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

Q Don't you think he ought to answer media questions like you do?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, since I didn't advise him privately, I don't think I should advise him publicly. It looks to me like he's doing a pretty good job with his campaign. But I did not -- I haven't talked to him about that at all.

Go ahead.

Q Mr. President, back on guns for just a moment. You said what we need to do is pass the strongest legislation we can pass. The leaders who came out were not all that specific, other than to say that the gun show loophole was the main thing hanging this up. In your view, what has to be done to close that loophole? Is it three days? Is it 24 hours? Is it less than 24 hours? What in your view needs to be done to close it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, let's look at the facts here. The answer may be a combination of both. That is, if you have an Insta-check system -- today, when we do the background checks, over 90 percent of them are completed within a day. Over 70 percent of them are completed within an hour, I think.

But you have to have some provision for dealing with the leakage. That is, suppose you're meeting over the weekend, and the records are not in the national crime database; suppose you're dealing with mental health records, for example, that would have, under the Brady Bill, would disqualify someone from getting a handgun, but aren't available; suppose you're dealing with records that are in a local police department that might not be in the database, where you have to make a phone call.

So the answer is, if you had 24 hours, you'd get most people. But the thing is, the people you don't get -- the people you don't get in that last 5 percent -- listen to this -- are 20 times more likely to be turned down than the population as a whole.

So what you need -- I have no objection to some provision which would say, okay, everybody that clears, do the 24 hours and let it roll. But you have to have some other provision there to deal with the 5 percent you can't -- or however, whatever the percentage is; it's less than 10 -- whatever the percentage is you can't get done in 24 hours, because a significant percentage of the people that shouldn't be getting the guns are in that percentage.

So that's why I say, you guys would have -- it would be great for you if they would actually have this conference and start debating this, and instead of debating the Senate provision or the Dingell bill, or the Senate provision or nothing, you could hear this debate between Conyers and Hyde, and we could get down to the facts. And it would be -- you'd really have something to get your teeth into and talk about in terms of, what does it take to save lives?

My criteria is, does it work? You know, I don't mind being -- like I said, I've been to these country gun shows. I know what they're like, and I understand what some of the practical questions raised are. But I'm just telling you, with a minimum of effort, we can save lives, and we can take care of all these cases that the Brady Bill takes care of.

So I'm not giving you an evasive answer. I'm telling you, this is a fact question. But you don't want to just -- the problem with the 24-hour thing is, you do over 90 percent of the checks, but of the ones that leak, they're 20 times more likely to be turned down. So, therefore, I think we have to have some provision to deal with them.

Q Mr. President, when do you plan to act on a request by Taiwan for new weapons systems? Do you think that granting such a request could help you with your China trade legislation on the Hill? And do you think the Taiwanese, perhaps, deserve the weapons given recent Chinese saber-rattling in the area?

THE PRESIDENT: I think my answer to the first question will answer the next two. I don't know because I have not sat down and looked at the facts. Any decision I make has to be made consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and with our general policy in the area. And I will do what I think the right thing to do is. But I literally have not had a meeting on it. We haven't discussed timing or anything; I have had no meetings.

Go ahead, April.

Q Mr. President, today is Super Tuesday, and it's the weeding-out process. What are your hopes for the candidates that are left standing? And since John McCain has been talking about George Bush's morals and ethics, have you been reminded of that cruel joke that he told about Chelsea a couple years ago, and what are your thoughts about that?

THE PRESIDENT: He asked me to forgive him, and I did.

Q Do you think that he makes an appropriate presidential candidate --

THE PRESIDENT: He asked me to forgive him, and I did. And since I have asked people to forgive me, I would be in a poor position if I refused the same thing. And I believe him to be a good man. And he asked me to forgive him, and I did.

And I think the -- you know, what I think -- I have a slightly different take on this than most people, I guess, but since I'm not a candidate maybe you will believe me when I tell you, since I'm not running. When people fight with each other over issues that they disagree with, and they advertise about it, I don't consider that necessarily negative campaigning. When people say to each other that they're somehow -- that their opponents are morally inferior, or that they're morally superior, that can be negative campaigning. It's also very hazardous.

You know, there are lots of verses in the Bible -- one of them says that you've got to be careful when you're standing not to brag about it; otherwise you might find yourself on your knees. I mean, you know -- but I think the fact that this has been a vigorous campaign fight over differences of opinion on campaign finance, the nature of a tax cut, what kind of education policy we should have in all these primaries, I think that's been good for the American people. And my only wish today is that there's a real big turnout. I just hope they all go out and vote, and I hope they'll continue to vote all the way to November.

MR. LOCKHART: Thanks. Thank you.

Q And your hope for those who remain standing?

THE PRESIDENT: What did you say?

Q The hopes for those who remain standing after this weeding-out process?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they ought to go before the American people and say this is the millennial election, and they ought to say what they say. You know who I'm for and what I hope happens in the election. But the main thing is, I want this election to be fought out over the issues. And if they fight over the issues and criticize each other over the issues, I don't consider that to be negative campaigning. That's debating. That's the way the system works.

I would like to see this election be given back to the American people. I'd like to see the fights over things that affect them and not over whether one candidate should have gotten more merit badges than another.

Q On gas prices, just one last quick question. There are predictions that it could go to \$1.80.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Today I paid \$1.70 for a gallon of gas. Well, I can afford it; many Americans can't. It's a serious thing for many people who are on tight budgets.

THE PRESIDENT: First of all, let me say -- I've told you this before, and as time goes on we'll have more to say about this. I've been working on this issue. I think what we want are stable oil prices that aren't too high, and I think that's the oil producing countries should want. Because what's going to happen is, there will be all kinds of reactions -- we have our options, others have theirs -- but some countries will just have their economic growth slowed if you have oil prices that are too high.

And then what's going to happen? One of two things, or both, will happen. You will either have a big drop in demand for oil prices, which will drive the price back down just because people won't be buying as much anymore, and it will cut the revenues of the oil-producing countries below where they would have been if they had maintained stable prices at a lower level. Or you will have a lot of non-OPEC members who aren't subject to their agreement start increasing their production, taking market share away from them, and that will also cut oil prices and lower their revenues, because they'll have less market share.

Now, one of those two things is going to happen unless there's more equilibrium in this market. And I think everybody recognizes that they're too high. There's a reason they're too high now -- because we're producing 73 million barrels a day and consuming 75 million. Therefore, the price is continuing to rise, because demand exceeds supply. And demand exceeds supply because of, in effect, artificial decisions made by the producers.

So this would be kind of like deregulation in America in telecom, and a lot of other areas. Once you get other producers, either that or supply will drop because -- I mean, excuse me -- demand will drop because they won't be able to sustain the price. So I think, sure, I want oil prices to go down some. But the producing countries should want them to go down some, too.

Now, on the other hand, Americans should not want them to drop to \$12 or \$10 a barrel again, because that puts you in this roller coaster environment which is very destabilizing to the producing countries and not particularly good for our economy, and takes our mind off our business, which should be alternative fuels, energy conservation, reducing the impact of all this on global warming.

But we need stable prices at a lower level, and that's what we're working for. And I hope that's what the producing countries will see is clearly in their best interests, because it is.

Thank you very much.

END 1:05 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 4, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ON REPORT ON GUN CRIMES

The South Grounds

9:30 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. Before I leave to go up to the Hill, I'd like to say a few words about an important new report I've just received on how guns flow from the legal firearms market to criminals, and to talk about the unprecedented new actions that we're taking to block that flow.

Keeping guns out of the wrong hands has been a priority for seven years for us, and we have made some real progress -- with the Brady law, with the ban on assault weapons, cracking down on illegal gun dealing to young people, with increased federal prosecutions of gun crimes and, beginning with the directive I issued in 1993, we have nearly quadrupled the number of traces that the ATF performs on guns used in crimes.

With the help of these and other efforts, we've cut gun crime by 35 percent since 1993, and homicide is at its lowest rate in over 30 years. But, as I said last week in The State of the Union, no one believes America is safe enough, and it's time we set the proper goal to make our nation the safest big country in the world.

We can do that by building on our progress and applying lessons learned. Some crucial lessons are captured in this ground-breaking new report by ATF, the most comprehensive look at the firearm industry ever done by the national government. Thanks to its increased tracing of crime guns, the ATF has been able to uncover an astonishing fact: Only one percent of the gun dealers in America sell over 57 percent of the guns used in crime.

These findings confirm a pattern that Senator Chuck Schumer has talked about for several months, and I want to thank him for his leadership on this issue.

In response to the findings in this report, I'm pleased to announced today that we're beginning the most aggressive effort ever undertaken to ensure responsible behavior by gun dealers. Dealers whose guns most frequently wind up in criminals' hands will now be subject to intense scrutiny by ATF. All dealers will be required to do a more thorough job of reporting gun thefts. In a moment, Secretary Summers, in a briefing, will explain to you how these and other actions will work in more detail.

The tragic shooting last year in Columbine High School showed us what happens when guns fall into the wrong hands. The actions I've announced today will enable the federal government to do a better job in fulfilling our responsibility to reduce gun violence.

Others have responsibilities, too. The gun industry must do its part. As I've said before, there are responsible citizens in that industry, manufacturers and dealers. They can help us to keep the guns out of the wrong hands. And Congress must fulfill its responsibility as well.

As its first order of business this year, I've asked Congress to pass common-sense gun safety legislation -- to close the gun show loophole, to require safety locks with all new handguns, to ban the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips. And, again, I repeat my call from the State of the Union that all new handgun buyers be required to have photo licenses from their states showing they passed the Brady background check and a gun safety course.

Congress has a responsibility, too, to provide law enforcement agencies, including the ATF, with the authority and resources they need to do their jobs. Under current law, ATF can only inspect a gun dealer, no matter how flagrant the problems are. And, as I said, one percent of the dealers provide 57 percent of the guns used in crime. Under current law, ATF is only permitted to inspect such dealerships once a year.

Today, I asked Congress, as I did last year, to remove this restriction, allow ATF to make up to three unannounced visits per year. I also asked Congress to fund my plan to hire 1,000 more federal and local gun prosecutors, more ATF agents and inspectors to crack down on these illegal gun traffickers and violent gun criminals. And, finally, I asked Congress to provide law enforcement with the tools to trace every gun and every bullet used in every crime in America.

When 12 children are dying every day in America because of gun violence, however, we can't wait for congressional action. That's why I'm taking the actions that I have announced today. We've seen the progress we can make when Americans at every level, from neighborhoods to local police departments, to state and federal government, take responsibility for fighting crime. Working together, we've brought crime down for seven straight years. We can keep going until America is the safest big country in the world.

I want to again say how grateful I am to the people who are here -- Secretary Summers; Treasury Under Secretary for Enforcement Jim Johnson; our ATF Director, Brad Buckles. And as I said, Secretary Summers will talk in the briefing room in more detail after I leave.

Let me just say one final thing before I go. I want to comment on the fact that we have just learned that unemployment last month fell to 4.0 percent, the lowest in three decades. Since 1993, our economy has now created nearly 21 million jobs. Today, strong employment numbers confirm, once and for all, that this is the longest economic expansion in our history.

The milestone is a credit to the American people, to their hard work. It also clearly highlights the need for us to stay on the path of fiscal discipline, overseas markets, investment in our people, that got us to this point. And I thank you very much.

Q -- call the U.S. Ambassador from Austria, or take any other specific measures, now that the government includes the Freedom Party?

THE PRESIDENT: I have to go up to the Hill. Secretary Albright is going to have an announcement on that today, in just a couple of hours.

Q Mr. President, any announcements on Northern Ireland, sir? Any updates on the situation there?

Q The process once again in a crisis?

THE PRESIDENT: Let me just say again -- I may have more to say about that in the next couple days -- it is at a very pivotal moment, as all of you have reported. We are working very hard on that. I have spent a lot of time on it; our whole team has.

I think that right now, the less we say publicly, the better. We are working intensely on this. It is imperative that everybody live up to the requirements of the Good Friday Accord, which was overwhelmingly adopted by the people of Northern Ireland in both communities. And everybody that's an actor here needs to follow the will of the people. We're working on it.

Q Thank you.

END 9:43 A.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 16, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
BEFORE DEPARTING FOR ST. PATRICK'S DAY LUNCH

The South Lawn

11:50 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon. I'd like to say just a few words before I go up to the Speaker's annual St. Patrick's Day luncheon about three issues.

Yesterday the House took a small, but significant step, down the long road toward common-sense gun safety legislation. House members from both parties have said it's time to get to work, after eight months and other senseless shootings; it's time for the House and Senate conference to resolve the differences between the two bills and send one to me.

The American people have spoken clearly and consistently about the need to protect our children from gun violence. The House is listening. I hope the Republican leaders in the House and the Senate will listen and get this conference underway.

Of course, a meeting is just a beginning. Congress should keep working until it sends me a bill I can sign that closes the gun show loophole, requires child safety locks with all new handguns, bans the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips. Again, I hope they will reconsider and restore the provision that hold adults responsible if they knowingly or recklessly let little children have access to guns.

A courageous, bipartisan majority in the House has now said no to the attack ads, no to the name-calling and no to the threats. They have stood up for the American people, but there are further tests ahead. The clock is ticking and America is waiting to see whether Congress can really produce a bill that responds to the interests of our children and not the intimidation of the NRA.

I'd also like to say a few words about the budget the House passed yesterday. It is more than a balance sheet; every budget is. It's a blueprint for our future. For seven years, our administration has worked to build a future based on fiscal discipline. The budget proposed by the Republican leadership would erode that discipline. It would weaken, not strengthen the foundation Americans have worked so hard to build for the future.

Before devoting a single dollar to pay down the debt, or extend the solvency of Social Security or Medicare, or provide a voluntary prescription drug benefit, or invest in our children's

education, the majority's budget already spends almost half a trillion dollars in tax cuts -- almost half a trillion and, as the Republican budget makes clear, they're just getting started.

This is unrealistic, unwise. The risks it poses are unconscionable. It is as risky and costly as the budget they proposed last year that I vetoed. It would undermine our ability to make America debt-free by 2013; to strengthen Social Security and take it out beyond the life of the baby boom generation; to lengthen the life of Medicare and add a voluntary prescription drug benefit.

It would slash our most pressing priorities across the board, from education and the environment, from law enforcement to public health, from scientific research to basic nutrition. It would be impossible for them to follow the path that we have all agreed on to modernize our defense forces and improve the quality of life of our men and women in uniform.

This is the wrong path for America. The only way they could meet their spending priorities with this tax cut is to go back to huge deficits. I asked the leadership to change course, to go back and write a budget that maintains our fiscal discipline and meets our most pressing priorities.

Now, the third issue I would like to mention very briefly is that I have just met with the Secretary of Energy and his team and my economic team, and we have talked about the present difficulties that Americans are facing because of the price of gasoline and the high price of oil, and what our short- and longer-term options are. and we've been working very hard on this now for several weeks, and we hope to have some things to say about it over the next few days.

But this is -- I'm encouraged by a lot of the developments that are going on. I hope there will be some relief soon when the OPEC meeting occurs. But I do believe we need to do more on our own here in America to deal with some of the things we've learned, some of the pressure points we've learned are on our people in these last few months.

So I just want to notify you that we are working on this and we will have some more to say later, and I don't want to be late to the Speaker's St. Patrick's Day lunch.

Q Mr. President, on the question of gun control --

Q Mr. President, have you spoken in person to any of the leaders of the OPEC nations to increase --

THE PRESIDENT: Wait, wait. The answer is, we have made clear what my public position is. I've said no more to anybody privately than I've said in public. I think it is in the interest of the OPEC nations and in the interest of the consuming nations to have a stable price of oil that gives them a fair return on their oil, enables them to run their countries and finance their budgets, but is not so high that it runs the risk of promoting inflation or recession, which will reduce the demand for oil by cratering the economies of other countries and hurting ours, and hurting a lot of innocent people in the process.

So the trick is to find the right balance. Oil was way too low last year because they increased production right as demand dropped after the Asian financial crisis. Now, the price is too high because they cut production right as demand increased when Europe and Asia were growing more again.

So we've got to get this back into balance. That's what I want to do. I think it's very much in their interest, and I haven't said any more in private than I'm saying to you in public, but we are working that.

Q Mr. President, Wayne LaPierre, last night on the news, said the blood of Ricky Birdsong is on your hands. I was wondering if you would like to respond to that personally, sir, and also go to the underlying issue of enforcement? The NRA contends the administration has been lax up until very recently on the enforcement issue.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, most of those -- I think the television news, some of the reports answered the Birdsong case in great detail, and I don't have anything to add to that. And again, I will say, I don't think -- getting into a personal spat with Mr. LaPierre about tactics that I don't think any American appreciates and that all Americans can see through is not worth doing.

I think on the enforcement issue, if you just go back and look at the facts that were reported on the news last night in this case, I think it makes the case. The question is: What should the states do? What should the federal government do? What is the appropriate thing to do in the Brady cases? And I believe what we've tried to do is the right course.

I think the Attorney General has tried to increase federal gun prosecutions. We've asked for resources to do more. But we've also tried to do it in a sensible way that left a lot of the burden and the criminal law where it belongs, with the local prosecutors. And I think to try to take a case like that, where actually the Brady bill worked, and if we had more comprehensive checking so that no one could sell a gun without a Brady background check, we'd have an even safer society, is not a very good argument for the other side to make.

And I think it's truly ironic that the NRA is now criticizing us for not throwing everybody in jail that fails a Brady background check when they opposed the Brady Bill. If it had been up to them, we wouldn't be doing these background checks, and 500,000 more felons, fugitives and stalkers would have handguns, so --

Q Is there a break in the Irish impasse?

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. We're working it.

Q Can I follow up on that, sir? Mr. President, why do you think the NRA has chosen this particular moment, though, to attack you?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea. I really don't know. Must be a good fundraising tactic. I honestly don't know. I don't know.

Q Because they've had their way mostly on Capitol Hill, it seems, up to this point.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I think they know that the majority of the American people support us on this bill, and if they get the bill before the Congress, it will pass. So maybe it's some strategy to try to keep it from ever being in an acceptable form to be voted on one way or the other.

I don't know. You'll have to ask them. I can't figure it out. Thanks.

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The New York Times♦ [View Related Topics](#)**March 15, 2000, Wednesday, Late Edition - Final****SECTION:** Section A; Page 1; Column 6; Metropolitan Desk**LENGTH:** 1138 words**HEADLINE:** PATAKI PROPOSES A BROAD PACKAGE OF **GUN** CONTROLS**BYLINE:** By RICHARD PEREZ-PENA**DATELINE:** ALBANY, March 14**BODY:**

Swimming against the tide of his own party, Gov. George E. Pataki today proposed a sweeping package of **gun** controls, including mandatory trigger locks with **gun** sales, a ban on assault weapons and steps to make it easier for the police to trace **guns** used in crimes.

Gun control advocates say the measures, if enacted, would give New York among the strictest **gun** controls in the country.

"Ultimately, if you think it's the right thing, you have to pursue it," Mr. Pataki told ABC News in an interview tonight. "I'm hopeful we can get this through the Legislature."

One of the measures would require so-called ballistics fingerprinting, which would record the unique markings from all new **guns** so that bullets and shell casings could later be traced to them.

In the interview, the governor called for raising the legal age for **gun** purchases to 21 from 18, and said he would seek to close a loophole in the system of background checks for **gun** buyers by requiring that those checks be done on buyers at **gun** shows and flea markets, not just on those who buy in stores. Aides to Mr. Pataki said he would unveil details of his proposals at a news conference Wednesday.

The proposals are expected to pass in the Democratic-controlled Assembly, though their fate in the Republican-dominated Senate is uncertain.

Some of the proposals put Mr. Pataki, who harbors ambitions of national office, at odds with the Republican leaders in Congress and many of his fellow Republican governors. In fact, they put him squarely in the camp of Democrats, including President Clinton, who have been calling for many of the same measures. It is a familiar position for Mr. Pataki, who favors abortion rights and gay rights, and who recently signed into law an ambitious health care program for the poor and an increase in the state's cigarette tax.

The Clinton administration has called on Congress to require background checks at **gun** shows and has proposed mandating ballistics fingerprinting, and specific **legislation** is being written by Democratic lawmakers, said Kristen Rand, the senior counsel for the Violence Policy Center, a **gun** control group. The **gun** control measure in the Congressional conference committee contains a trigger-lock provision, but **gun** control advocates say it is too weak.

Brian Morton, the spokesman for Handgun Control, said Mr. Pataki's proposals went beyond what most other states were considering this year and were important given that Mr. Pataki is a Republican.

"Coming from a Republican governor this is revolutionary," Mr. Morton said. "This is an incredible, forward-looking step in law enforcement and crime control. It shows that this is not a partisan issue."

The governor's proposals, the first significant **gun** control **legislation** he has called for in his five years in office, will no doubt sail through the Democratic-controlled Assembly, which has passed the various elements of the Pataki plan at one time or another. "I welcome him aboard," the speaker of the Assembly, Sheldon Silver, said of the governor. "We've been doing these things for years."

The State Senate, where Republicans hold the majority, has resisted **gun** control measures in the past, but in this election year, the majority leader, Joseph L. Bruno, has expressed a willingness to consider some measures, though he has not given any specifics. John McArdle, a spokesman for Mr. Bruno, would not comment on the governor's plans.

The most innovative part of the governor's plan would require that any new **gun** sold in New York be fired first, to record its "ballistic fingerprint," the pattern of nicks and scratches left on a bullet that is unique to each weapon. Such markings are often used by the police and prosecutors to trace a crime to a particular **gun**, but first the **gun** must be found. Under Mr. Pataki's plan, the ballistics patterns of all new **guns** would go into a database.

"At a crime scene, people don't leave the **gun** very often," the governor told ABC. "But they do leave bullets or shell casings."

The National Rifle Association has opposed the taking ballistics samples for the government, contending that it would be a first step toward national **gun** registration.

Ronald Michon, the vice president of the New York State Rifle and Pistol association, the state affiliate of the N.R.A., said his organization would likely oppose the **legislation**.

"They don't need any more **legislation**, they just need to enforce the ones that are on the books," he said. "They are throwing up a smokescreen for their own inadequacies at enforcing the laws."

Mr. Michon said the trigger lock **legislation** was inferior to a measure Mr. Pataki vetoed last year that would have taught an N.R.A. **gun** education program in state schools.

"Trigger locks are unnecessary because it's proven they won't work," Mr. Michon said. "The state association has pushed to educate kids that you should not touch a **gun**."

Gun control has become one of the most contentious issues in Washington, and it promises to become a big part of the presidential campaign.

Congressional Republicans have generally resisted **gun** control measures, though some measures, like requiring trigger locks with **gun** sales, enjoy broad support.

Last year, after the Columbine High School shooting in Colorado, each house of Congress passed its own measure that would, among other things, close the **gun** show loophole. But negotiators have made no progress toward reconciling the differences between the two bills, and some Republican leaders have made it clear that they think both versions go too far, saying that what is needed is

better enforcement of existing laws. President Clinton has accused Congressional Republicans of stalling.

Each highly publicized school shooting like Columbine leads to a new round of legislative proposals for **gun** control, and new heights of popularity for those proposals.

Calls for requiring that trigger locks be included in all **gun** sales have grown in the two weeks since a 6-year-old boy in Michigan fatally shot a classmate with a pistol he found in his home. Such a lock physically blocks the movement of the trigger, making the **gun** impossible to fire without having the key to remove it..

Proposals to ban or restrict assault rifles gained momentum after such a weapon was used in a schoolyard shooting in Stockton, Calif., in 1989 that left five children dead.

The governor's office would not release details of the assault weapons ban last night. There is a federal ban on assault weapons, but it has so many loopholes that some states have passed bans of their own to close them. A ban enacted in California last year, for example, spells out the physical characteristics of banned weapons, such as fixed magazines that carry more than 10 rounds and features that allow rapid firing.

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The New York Times♦ [View Related Topics](#)**March 16, 2000, Thursday, Late Edition - Final****SECTION:** Section B; Page 1; Column 1; Metropolitan Desk**LENGTH:** 1127 words**HEADLINE:** Political Memo;
Pataki Defies Expectations In Proposal On **Gun** Curbs**BYLINE:** By RICHARD PEREZ-PENA**DATELINE:** ALBANY, March 15**BODY:**

Once again, Gov. George E. Pataki has demonstrated his knack for defying expectations and, with little warning, jumping far ahead of other politicians, particularly his fellow Republicans, on a hot issue.

Mr. Pataki today proposed perhaps the widest-ranging **gun** controls in the country, a subject in which he had previously shown little interest. Over the last nine months, he has proposed a campaign finance **reform** package, imposed the nation's strictest air pollution limits on old power plants and signed into law a major new health care program for the poor, financed by a large increase in the cigarette tax.

Common to each step was that it was opposed by many Republican leaders and embraced by Democrats, and that it caught nearly everyone off guard, allies and adversaries alike. Even after five years, Mr. Pataki, who arrived as a law-and-order tax-cutter railing against the state's entrenched liberalism, is hard to pin down, a governor largely unencumbered by ideology.

Given Mr. Pataki's interest in national office, perhaps as a running mate this year for George W. Bush, he inevitably touched off rampant speculation within New York's political circles about what his latest bombshell meant to those ambitions. One school of thought says he has given up on this year's vice presidential bid and is instead aiming to tighten his hold on New York's political center, intending to run for a third term in 2002. Another school says that the more liberal Mr. Pataki appears, the more attractive he becomes to Mr. Bush as a ticket-balancer.

"I'm not concerned about the politics here, I'm concerned about the policy," the governor said today, when asked about such talk. "Whether or not it's politically popular or unpopular, you do what you think is right." He said **gun** control was a natural outgrowth of his efforts to fight crime.

The governor and his aides are infuriated by such questions, insisting that he is motivated by principle, and his advisers say that in any case, they always saw the vice presidency as a long, long

shot.

But a few points are beyond question. Championing **gun** control -- like his other major initiatives of the last year -- will make Mr. Pataki more popular in New York, a state that still leans left. And this latest move will go a long way toward undoing the damage done to his image by the state's recent presidential primary campaign, when he tried to keep Senator John McCain off the ballot, only to have a court rule in favor of Mr. McCain.

Mr. Pataki's newest proposal adds to the wide gap between some of the nation's Republican governors and the much more conservative Republican leadership in Congress, on everything from **gun** controls to tobacco to health care.

But highly publicized shootings, especially in schools, have raised the volume on calls for new controls. Republican governors like Bill Owen of Colorado, Michael O. Leavitt of Utah and Bob Taft of Ohio have proposed **gun** measures, and others, like Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey and Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania, have signed them into law. Mr. Leavitt and Mr. Owen, frustrated by their state's Legislatures, are supporting **gun**-control ballot initiatives.

"Over the past couple of years, some of our strongest allies have been Republican governors," said Joe Sudbay, political director of Handgun Control Inc., a lobbying group in Washington. "There's been a real turnaround on this."

Even Mr. Bush, the governor of Texas and the apparent Republican presidential nominee, whom the National Rifle Association has called one of its best friends, expressed support for much of Mr. Pataki's plan. In an interview in Austin today, he specifically endorsed a ban on assault weapons and a requirement for so-called ballistic fingerprinting to make **guns** easier to trace. He also voiced general support for laws requiring trigger locks and for background checks on people who buy **guns** at **gun** shows, though he said he was not familiar with all the details of Mr. Pataki's plan.

Mr. Pataki will get most of what he wants here, if not all. The Democrats who control the State Assembly embraced his package, most of which they have passed before.

The Republican-controlled State Senate has resisted **gun** measures in the past. But today, Joseph L. Bruno, the majority leader, said his house was amenable to much of the governor's plan, and acknowledged that the change was due to events like the Columbine High School shooting in Colorado last year.

"Of course, when you see some atrocity out there, some tragedy, whatever it is, we collect ourselves and say, 'Is there something that we can do to prevent that from happening in the future,' " he said.

But Senate Republicans said the issue still divided those in rural areas, who oppose **gun** controls, from those in the cities and suburbs.

Mr. Bruno said the Senate was prepared to ban assault weapons and require that trigger locks be included in all **gun** sales, as Mr. Pataki proposed. As for another proposal, to raise the minimum age for **gun** ownership to 21 from 18, he said, "We're open to that."

The most innovative element of Mr. Pataki's plan would require that before a new **gun** was sold in New York, it would have to be test fired so that the unique pattern of marks it leaves on a bullet and shell casing could be recorded and entered into a state database, making **guns** used in crimes easier to trace. Mr. Bruno did not rule it out, but questioned whether ballistic fingerprinting was technologically feasible, though police agencies say it is.

Mr. Bruno seemed equally concerned about being snubbed by the governor, with whom he is feuding. Mr. Pataki did not notify the Senate leader before making his proposals in an interview on ABC Tuesday night, but he did warn the leaders of the Assembly. Mr. Bruno said derisively that it was hard to gauge the governor's plan because there was no bill yet.

The governor proposed requiring background checks for **gun** sales at **gun** shows and flea markets, closing a loophole in the federal law that requires background checks on sales in stores. Mr. Sudbay said that 16 states have similar laws.

Ten states, he said, set the minimum age at 21. Only five states -- California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Pennsylvania -- require trigger locks with **gun** sales. Just four -- the same list, minus Pennsylvania -- ban assault weapons. (Federal law has banned most assault weapons since 1994, but **gun** control advocates say state laws are needed so local police and prosecutors can enforce the ban.)

No state requires ballistic fingerprinting, Mr. Sudbay said.

"If these proposals are, in fact, substantive," he said, "then this would put Governor Pataki in the forefront of governors pushing common-sense **gun** safety agendas."

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GRAPHIC: Photos: Gov. George E. Pataki has proposed wide-ranging controls on **guns**. (Don Hogan Charles/The New York Times)(pg. B1); Sgt. Craig Grazerof of the state police explained shell case markings yesterday to Gov. George E. Pataki, who held a model of a shell. Mr. Pataki has proposed laws to regulate **gun** sales and to track the **guns'** use. (Don Hogan Charles/The New York Times)(pg. B6)

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The New York Times♦ [View Related Topics](#)**March 24, 2000, Friday, Late Edition - Final****SECTION:** Section A; Page 14; Column 5; National Desk**LENGTH:** 1044 words**HEADLINE:** Maryland Senate Brings **Gun** Locks to Floor Debate**BYLINE:** By FRANCIS X. CLINES**DATELINE:** ANNAPOLIS, Md., March 23**BODY:**

Amid growing public and political pressure for stronger **gun** control laws, the Maryland Senate put aside legislative tradition today to bypass a critical committee and bring to floor debate Gov. Parris N. Glendening's proposal for mandatory locks on all new handguns.

The bill, which had been stalled in committee until some unusual parliamentary maneuvering this morning, would enact one of the toughest laws in the country, mandating attachable trigger locks this year and built-in locks in three years, with an eye toward monitoring technology and eventually requiring "smart **guns**" operable solely by lawful owners once the technology is available.

"The public has reached a point of real frustration that is on the verge of turning to anger," Mr. Glendening said in an interview. "What the public is saying is: no more," he added, citing strong public polling support for the proposal, which includes a mandate that manufacturers provide ballistic signatures for each new **gun** to aid in tracking **gun** violence.

"I recorded this forever," Mr. Glendening, a Democrat, said in his Statehouse office after monitoring and downloading the debate with his laptop computer and hearing **gun**-control opponents, caught short, rising to demand points of order and vowing to fight on through filibusters.

Even so, the governor predicted passage of the bill by both houses now that it had been forced by a Senate majority from the powerful Judicial Proceedings Committee, a panel where the proposal had earlier been pronounced dead by most members, many from rural areas.

The measure was brought to the floor in the Democratic-controlled Senate on a 26-to-19 vote, with 5 Democrats joining the Senate's 14 Republicans in opposition. Governor Glendening predicted that the 32 votes needed to end filibusters in the 47-member Senate would be found within a matter of days.

"A month ago, no one gave us a chance on this," Mr. Glendening said of the proposal, emphasizing that in his view, the opposition lawmakers saw the ground cut from under them in the last week by Smith & Wesson's agreement with President Clinton to begin marketing smart **guns** within three

years. Statehouse opponents here had sought to put off the subject of **gun** control by arguing that smart **gun** technology, one of the features in the governor's proposal, was impractical.

"That was a key psychological breakthrough," Governor Glendening said as he also cited growing public disgust with repeated instances of **gun** violence, including the harrowing disruption of a Baltimore suburb this week when a suspect in four **gun** deaths held hostages and was finally shot to death.

"And the excesses of the National Rifle Association in personally attacking the president are producing a very negative reaction in the public," the governor added. "In a moderate to progressive state like ours, all the N.R.A. is doing is solidifying people and making them stronger in their resolve to control **gun** violence."

The governor cited in particular the "courage" of the Senate president, Thomas V. Mike Miller Jr., a Prince George's County Democrat, in finally deciding to bypass the traditional committee process in a floor maneuver that had not been used in decades. Mr. Miller, whose district includes the Beretta U.S.A. **gun** factory, described today as "D Day" on the deadlocked **gun** control issue. He agreed that trigger lock **legislation** favored by many could reach the floor for debate once the smart **gun** question had been deferred by the governor.

Rather than an immediate endorsement of smart **guns** that Mr. Glendening originally proposed, technological progress toward the **gun** would be monitored annually by the Legislature instead. This was a concession the governor quickly made once Smith & Wesson made its commitment to market smart **guns** nationally on the same three-year timetable he sought in the state.

Mr. Glendening had campaigned strongly on **gun** control promises in both his winning campaigns for governor. He made the state the first in the nation to adopt **legislation** that prevents individuals from buying more than one **gun** a month. Other states have passed similar measures since the **legislation** was adopted four years ago. He also took the lead in the smart **gun** proposal, deferring that when legislative leaders agreed to bypass the committee and to approve a compromise package that protects the rest of the governor's proposals.

Beyond **gun** locks, the measure would bar anyone with a record as a juvenile offender from buying firearms until the age of 30 and would require training lessons for new handgun buyers.

The latest state opinion polls showed 67 percent support for approving smart **guns**, the governor noted, and -- for the first time -- a 54 percent majority favoring an outright ban on handguns, if necessary.

"People are more willing to do something about this," Mr. Glendening said. "People are saying if you can't do something about it, such as smart **guns**, then let's get rid of it all together."

The governor has been citing the problem of **gun** violence in virtually every speech lately, emphasizing that more than 7,000 state residents have been killed by **guns** in the last decade. A natural disaster costing 7,000 lives in Baltimore would summon furious demands from the public to take action, he tells audiences. "Yet because we kill one another one at a time, there's not the same sense of outrage."

Constantly updating a list of vivid national incidents of fatal shooting sprees, he regularly tells constituents, "Think about what you have seen in the news for the last two months and ask whether we're going to live the rest of our lives this way."

Far from shying from the controversial **gun** issue, Mr. Glendening has built his career around it, beginning with 12 years service as the elected chief executive of Prince George's County, a Washington suburb with a history of substantial **gun** violence. "I buried 8 police officers in my 12 years there," he grimly noted.

"We'll be the first state in the country to mandate that every new **gun** must have an integrated lock

system," he said, predicting that other states would follow suit in the face of what he described as a growing public resolve to press the **gun** control issue upon reluctant politicians.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

GRAPHIC: Photo: Gov. Parris N. Glendening, in his office in Annapolis, Md., predicted yesterday that the Legislature would pass tough **gun** control measures. (Susana Raab for The New York Times)

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