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12/18/95 Veto on Environmental Spending Bills & Other Gov't Shutdown/Budget Stuff [2]

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draft, 12/15/95 4 p.m.

**President William J. Clinton
Saturday Radio Address to the Nation
Oval Office
December 16, 1995**

Good morning.

Today I want to talk about the national budget, and I would like you to listen as a mother or father, an aunt or an uncle, a big brother or sister, or simply as a concerned citizen with a stake in the direction our nation is headed.

I know you've heard this budget battle described as one in which the winners and losers are in Washington. But the reality is that this budget will affect real lives all around our nation. And under the Republican budget proposal, the biggest losers are in your homes and in the homes of your neighbors.

And from infants to toddlers to adolescents to college-age young people, it is America's children who will bear the brunt of the sharp budget cuts proposed by the Republican Congress. The budget cuts they propose are the equivalent of a declaration of war on America's children. And that I cannot and I will not allow.

I say again: I will fight for our principles, I will fight for those things that protect our children, our families and our values. And that is why last week when the Republican Congress sent me a budget with the biggest Medicare and Medicaid cuts in history, deep cuts

in education and the environment and tax hikes on working people -- I vetoed it. And I offered a proposal that protects our principles and still balances the budget in seven years.

I want to be clear about this: I very much want to work with the Republican Congress to get a balanced budget, because I don't believe that we want to leave a legacy of debt to our children. But neither do I believe that we should leave the next generation a legacy of neglect.

If the Republican plan becomes law, millions of children would be denied the basics they need to live productive lives. They will be denied health care they now have, schooling they can count on, nutritious food, a safe place to live, air and water that we can count on to be safe to breathe and to drink.

I'm not talking only about poor children. These cuts will leave a much wider scar on our nation. They threaten every child's future.

Consider what would happen to education. The Republican plan eliminates Head Start for 180,000 pre-schoolers; it eliminates initiatives that improve teaching and learning in our schools; it cuts our efforts to keep drugs and violence out of our schools and it kills AmeriCorps, our highly effective national service program.

The Republican plan would push 7 million children toward poverty by cutting tax breaks for

working families.

Their budget cuts would leave children exposed to hazardous waste. Nearly 10 million children under the age of 12 live within 4 miles of a seriously polluted hazardous waste site. We want to clean up these sites, but their cuts would limit what we can do.

And consider what would happen to Medicaid. For three decades, Medicaid has been a legal guarantee for millions who need medicare care -- children, pregnant women, the disabled and senior citizens. It has been the primary source of health care for nearly one in four American children. More than half of the children on Medicaid live in families with working parents.

But the Republican plan repeals Medicaid's guarantees. Only the poorest children under the age of 13 could expect coverage. But what about all the other children? There are so many families in the middle class who are caught unprepared when disaster strikes. These are hardworking people like Laura and David Dupler. They had just begun their own business when one of their three children was diagnosed with leukemia. Because they didn't yet have insurance, they needed Medicaid so that little Theresa could be treated with chemotherapy. And now, with the help of Medicaid and God's grace, she's in remission.

Medicaid also helps millions of children who are disabled or who suffer from chronic illness. It is the primary health care coverage for 9 out of 10 children with HIV and AIDS.

Medicaid is their lifeline. But the Republican plan would pull it away from more than 4 million kids. This, coupled with their budget's repeal of our children immunization program, leaves too many children in harm's way.

These Republican budget cuts are aimed squarely at our children. They will face larger classes, fewer head start programs, 10 million will live near toxic waste sites that won't be cleaned, fewer will be immunized, millions will be denied adequate medical care and over a million will be forced into poverty. This is no way to treat our children. And there's no way I'm going to let the Republicans do it.

My fellow Americans, I will fight these cuts because they are anti-children. Children are not a special interest; they are our sacred obligation.

Our own budget proposal shows that these cuts simply are not necessary to arrive at a balanced budget. My plan reforms Medicaid and keeps costs down. It protects education and gives working families with children a tax break. It balances the budget, and it still protects our children.

That's what we will continue to fight for in this budget battle, until our children come out the winners.

Thanks for listening.

President William J. Clinton
Saturday Radio Address to the Nation
Oval Office
December 16, 1995

Good morning. At midnight last night, for the second time in a month, the Republican Congress shut down the federal government in an effort to force through their unacceptable cuts in health care, education and the environment. For weeks, my administration and the Republicans in Congress have been in serious negotiations over how to reach common ground on balancing the budget.

This past week, I forwarded to them a budget that would protect our principles and balance in seven years. I had hoped that this time would be different, that we were past the Republican threats to shut down the government to get their way. But yesterday, they broke off our talks. They actually said that as a condition for our talks to continue, we had to agree right now to make deep and unconscionable cuts in Medicare and Medicaid. That is unacceptable. The cuts they propose would deprive millions of people of health care -- poor children, pregnant women, the disabled, seniors in nursing homes. They would let Medicare "wither on the vine." And these things simply are not necessary to balance the budget.

Let me be clear: I very much want to work with the Congress to get a balanced budget, because we should not leave a legacy of debt to our children. But neither should we leave the next generation a legacy of neglect.

The facts are plain: The Congress has failed to pass a budget for next year and the bills that would fund the agencies of the government. For them to cause a shutdown, denying Americans the services their tax dollars support, as a tactic in a budget debate, is wrong and irresponsible. I won't give in to this threat, and let me tell you why.

I know you've been told that the winners and losers of this budget battle are in Washington. But this budget will affect real lives all around our nation. And under the Republican budget proposal, the biggest losers are in your homes and the homes of your neighbors.

All America's children would bear the most pain from the sharp budget cuts proposed by the Republican Congress. If the Republican plan becomes law, millions of children would be denied the basics they need: health care they now have, schooling they can count on, nutritious food, a safe place to live, air and water that we can be sure is safe to breathe and to drink.

Consider what would happen to Medicaid. For three decades, Medicaid has been a legal guarantee for millions who need medicare care. It has been the primary source of health care for nearly 1 in 4 American children. More than half of the children on Medicaid live in families with working parents.

But the Republican plan repeals Medicaid's guarantees. That spells disaster for families in the middle class who are caught unprepared.

Medicaid helps these hardworking families. It helps millions of children who are disabled or who suffer from chronic illness or who have the AIDS virus.

Medicaid is the lifeline for all these children. But the Republican plan would pull it away from more than 4 million [CORRECT????] kids. This, coupled with their budget's repeal of our children immunization program, leaves too many youngsters in harm's way.

In education, the Republican plan eliminates Head Start for 180,000 pre-schoolers; it increases class sizes and eliminates initiatives to improve teaching and learning; it cuts our efforts to keep drugs and violence out of our schools. It kills AmeriCorps, our highly effective national service program and it denies scholarships to more than 350,000 deserving college students.

The Republican plan would push 7 million children toward poverty [PAULINE, IS THIS FIGURE CORRECT?] by raising taxes for working families.

Their budget cuts would leave children exposed to hazardous waste. Nearly 10 million children under the age of 12 live within 4 miles of a seriously polluted hazardous waste site. We know that pollution affects children more than it does adults. We want to clean up these sites, but the Republican cuts would limit what we can do.

These Republican budget cuts are aimed squarely at our children. They will face larger classes and fewer Head Start programs; 10 million will live near toxic waste sites that won't be cleaned, fewer will be immunized, millions will be denied adequate medical care and more than one million will be forced into poverty. This is no way to treat our children. And there's no way I'm going to let the Republicans do it.

Our budget proposal shows that these cuts simply are not necessary for a balanced budget. My plan reforms Medicaid and keeps costs down. It protects education and gives working families with children a tax break. It balances the budget, and it still protects children.

And it is wrong for the congressional Republicans to insist that I make deep cuts in Medicare and Medicaid as a condition to just talk. It is wrong that they shut down the government down again just before Christmas. It would be wrong to accept their threat. I rejected their threat last month, and I reject it now.

I will continue to fight for our principles in this budget battle, because that's the only way our children can come out the winners. Thanks for listening.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

December 16, 1995

RADIO ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATION

The Oval Office

10:06 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. At midnight last night, for the second time in a month, the Republican Congress shut down the federal government in an effort to force through their unacceptable cuts in health care, education and the environment.

For weeks, my administration and the Republicans in Congress have been in serious negotiations over how to reach common ground on balancing the budget. A week ago, I forwarded to them a plan that would protect our principles and balance the budget in seven years. I had hoped that this time would be different, that we were past the Republican threats to shut down the government just to get their way.

But yesterday, they broke off our talks. Unbelievably, they actually said that as a condition for our talks to continue, we had to agree right now to make deep and unconscionable cuts in Medicare and Medicaid. That is unacceptable.

The cuts they propose would deprive millions of people of health care -- poor children, pregnant women, the disabled, seniors in nursing homes. They would let Medicare wither on the vine into a second class system. Now, these things simply are not necessary to balance the budget.

Let me be clear: As I have said from the beginning, I very much want to work with Congress to get a balanced budget. After all, working with the previous Congress in my first two years as President, we cut the deficit I found when I became President in half; we reduced the size of the federal government by 200,000. We ought to finish the job. We shouldn't leave a legacy of debt to our children. But neither should we leave the next generation a legacy of neglect.

We've cut the deficit in half while continuing to invest in education, technology, research, the environment, Medicare and Medicaid and cutting taxes on the most hard-pressed of our working people. That's what we ought to do in this budget plan.

Now as far as shutting the government down goes, this is not a result of our lack of agreement on a balanced budget plan. The two things have no connection. The facts are plain. The Congress has failed to pass a budget for next year and the bills that would fund the agencies of government on purpose. They have deliberately done this to force me to accept their long-term agenda of big cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, education and the environment and a tax increase on working people. That's what's in their balanced budget plan. But it's not necessary to balance the budget.

So for them to cause a shutdown, denying Americans the services their tax dollars support as a tactic in the budget debate is wrong. It's irresponsible. I won't give in to the threat. I didn't last time, and I can't now. Let me tell you why.

I know you've been told that the winners and losers of this budget battle are all in Washington, and it's all politics. But that's not true. America's children would bear the most pain from the sharp cuts proposed by the Republican Congress. If the Republican plan becomes law, millions of children would be denied basics they need -- health care they now have, schooling they can count on, school lunches, a safe place to live, or air and water we can be sure is safe to breathe and to drink.

Just consider what would happen to Medicaid. For three decades Medicaid has been a legal guarantee for millions who need medical care. It has been the primary source of health care for nearly one in five American children. And more than half of the children on Medicaid live in families with working parents. It is not a welfare program. But the Republican plan repeals Medicaid's guarantees. And that spells disaster for families in the middle class who are caught unprepared.

Medicaid helps millions of children who are disabled, or who suffer from chronic illnesses, or who have the AIDS virus. But the Republican plan could pull this lifeline from millions of children.

In education, the Republican plan eliminates Head Start for 180,000 preschoolers. It cuts our efforts to keep drugs and violence out of our schools. It undermines our efforts to help schools meet national standards of excellence for the first time. It kills the AmeriCorps national service program. It denies scholarships to more than 350,000 deserving college students and takes away the best student loan program available to young people. It lowers the cost and eases the terms of repayment.

The Republican plan would raise taxes for over 7 million of our hardest-pressed working families. Their budget cuts would leave children exposed to hazardous waste. And we know that pollution affects children more than it

does adults. We want to clean up these sites, but the Republican cuts would limit what we can do.

The Republican budget cuts are aimed squarely at our children. They will face larger classes and fewer Head Start programs. Ten million will live near toxic waste sites that won't be cleaned. Fewer will be immunized. Millions will be denied adequate medical care. And more than 1 million will be forced into poverty.

That is no way to treat our children. Let them threaten to shut the government down. It is not necessary to do this to balance the budget, and so I am not going to let them hurt our children and compromise their future.

Our budget proposal shows these cuts are not necessary. Our plan balances the budget in seven years, reforms Medicare and Medicaid, keeps costs down. It protects education and gives working families with children a tax break, not a tax increase. It is wrong for the congressional Republicans to insist that I make deep cuts in Medicare and Medicaid just as a condition to talk. It is wrong for them to shut the government down again just before Christmas. It would be wrong for me to accept that threat. I rejected it last month; I reject it now.

I know this shutdown will affect the lives of millions of Americans, especially at this holiday season. I'll do whatever I can to lessen the impact. Above all, the Republicans should come back to the table. Congress should immediately pass straightforward legislation to reopen the government. That is the responsible thing to do. And we should be talking again with each other about how to balance the budget in the interest of the American people.

I'll continue to fight for our American principles in this budget battle, because that's the only way our children can come out the winners.

Thanks for listening.

END

10:14 A.M. EST

MORE

President William J. Clinton
Saturday Radio Address to the Nation
Oval Office
December 16, 1995

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For weeks, my administration and the Republicans in Congress have been in serious negotiations over how to reach common ground on balancing the budget.

A week ago, I forwarded to them a plan that would protect our principles and balance the budget in seven years. I had hoped that this time would be different, that we were past the Republican threats to shut down the government to get their way.

But yesterday, they broke off our talks. They actually said that as a condition for our talks to continue, we had to agree right now to make deep and unconscionable cuts in Medicare and Medicaid. That is unacceptable. The cuts they propose would deprive millions of people of health care -- poor children, pregnant women, the disabled, seniors in nursing homes. They would let Medicare "wither on the vine" into a second-class system. And these things simply are not necessary to balance the budget.

Let me be clear: I very much want to work with the Congress to get a balanced budget, because we should not leave a legacy of debt to our children. But neither should we leave the next generation a legacy of neglect.

The facts are plain: The Congress has failed to pass a budget for next year and the bills that would fund the agencies of the government. For them to cause a shutdown, denying Americans the services their tax dollars support, as a tactic in a budget debate, is wrong and irresponsible. I won't give in to this threat, and let me tell you why.

I know you've been told that the winners and losers of this budget battle are in Washington. But this budget will affect real lives all around our nation. And under the Republican budget proposal, the biggest losers are in your homes and the homes of your neighbors.

All America's children would bear the most pain from the sharp budget cuts proposed by the Republican Congress. If the Republican plan becomes law, millions of children would be denied the basics they need: health care they now have, schooling they can count on, nutritious food, a safe place to live, air and water that we can be sure is safe to breathe and to drink.

Consider what would happen to Medicaid. For three decades, Medicaid has been a legal guarantee for millions who need medicare care. It has been the primary source of health care

for nearly 1 in 4 American children. More than half of the children on Medicaid live in families with working parents.

But the Republican plan repeals Medicaid's guarantees. That spells disaster for families in the middle class who are caught unprepared.

Medicaid helps these hardworking families. It helps millions of children who are disabled or who suffer from chronic illness or who have the AIDS virus.

Medicaid is the lifeline for all these children. But the Republican plan could pull it away from more than 4 million kids. This, coupled with their budget's repeal of our children immunization program, leaves too many youngsters in harm's way.

In education, the Republican plan eliminates Head Start for 180,000 pre-schoolers; it increases class sizes and eliminates initiatives to improve teaching and learning; it cuts our efforts to keep drugs and violence out of our schools. It kills AmeriCorps, our highly effective national service program and it denies scholarships to more than 350,000 deserving college students.

The Republican plan would raise taxes for working families, pushing 1 million of them into poverty.

Their budget cuts would leave children exposed to hazardous waste. Nearly 10 million children under the age of 12 live within 4 miles of a seriously polluted hazardous waste site. We know that pollution affects children more than it does adults. We want to clean up these sites, but the Republican cuts would limit what we can do.

These Republican budget cuts are aimed squarely at our children. They will face larger classes and fewer Head Start programs; 10 million will live near toxic waste sites that won't be cleaned, fewer will be immunized, millions will be denied adequate medical care and more than one million will be forced into poverty. This is no way to treat our children. Let them threaten to shut the government down; there's no way I'm going to let them hurt our children.

Our budget proposal shows that these cuts simply are not necessary for a balanced budget. My plan reforms Medicaid and keeps costs down. It protects education and gives working families with children a tax break. It balances the budget, and it still protects children.

And it is wrong for the congressional Republicans to insist that I make deep cuts in Medicare and Medicaid as a condition to just talk. It is wrong that they shut down the government down again just before Christmas. It would be wrong to accept their threat. I rejected their threat last month, and I reject it now.

I will continue to fight for our principles in this budget battle, because that's the only way our children can come out the winners. Thanks for listening.

E X E C U T I V E O F F I C E O F T H E P R E S I D E N T

15-Dec-1995 10:10am

TO: (See Below)

FROM: Jason S. Goldberg
 National Economic Council

SUBJECT: Daily Talking Points 12/15/95

PRESIDENT CLINTON STANDS FIRM:
ANY BALANCED BUDGET AGREEMENT MUST PROTECT MEDICARE,
MEDICAID, EDUCATION, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND TAX FAIRNESS
December 15, 1995

"[W]e have to balance the budget in the way that reflects our most fundamental values -- increasing opportunity; asking all to assume responsibility; strengthening our families and the economy; recognizing the duty we owe to each other, to our parents, our children and those who need and deserve our help....If necessary, I'll veto deep cuts in health care for children again and again and again. I'll do it because they are not necessary to balance the budget."
-President Clinton
December 9, 1995

President Clinton will make the cuts we need to balance the budget, but he refuses to make cuts into our fundamental American values. He will fight the efforts of some Republicans to blackmail America and shut down the government right before Christmas just to get their way.

- o Balancing the Budget to lift the burden of debt off our children.
- o Protecting Medicaid and Medicare so that we honor our commitment to America's elderly, people with disabilities and children.
- o Investing in Education and Training, so America's families can thrive in the new economy.
- o Protecting the Environment and Public Health, so our children grow up in a clean and safe world.
- o Rewarding Work over welfare and providing tax relief for middle class families.

President Clinton's seven year balanced budget protects America's values and meets the goals of his agreement with the Republicans. In putting forth his plan to balance the budget in 7 years while protecting America's

priorities, President Clinton satisfied both stipulations of the Continuing Resolution agreement: (1) balance the budget in 7 years; (2) while protecting Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment, and adopting tax policies to help working families and stimulate economic growth.

Now, that the President has shown that you can balance the budget in 7 years using conservative economic assumptions while protecting these fundamental priorities, the onus is on the Republicans to explain why they insist on an extreme budget that unnecessarily disregards America's priorities and values.

Questions The Republicans Must Answer For The American People:

- o Why do they want to deny 1.3 million disabled people

the Medicaid guarantee of meaningful health benefits when it is not necessary in order to balance the budget in 7 years?

- o Why do they want to raise Medicare premiums above current policy when it is not necessary in order to balance the budget in 7 years?
- o Why do they want to deny 180,000 pre-school children a Head Start when it is not necessary in order to balance the budget in 7 years?
- o Why do they want to single out 8 million families with incomes less than \$30,000 for tax increases when it is not necessary in order to balance the budget in 7 years?
- o Why do they want to cut anti-pollution enforcement by 25% when it is not necessary in order to balance the budget in 7 years?

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REMARKS BY PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
EPA REPORT ON CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
THE WHITE HOUSE
DECEMBER 18, 1995

[Acknowledgements: Vice President Gore; Administrator Browner; and the students of Thomas Jefferson Middle School in Arlington, Virginia.]

Just met w/VP - Browner & Students
First of all, let me thank the students of Thomas Jefferson Middle School for giving up a school day to come to the White House. I know how difficult a decision that must have been. I am always happy to have young people come here. Your energy and enthusiasm remind us that everything we do in this House and in the Congress should be focused on making your lives and your future better. That's really what's most at stake in the current budget debate.

on children & their health
Today, I want to talk about the absolutely devastating impact that Congressional budget cuts would have on the environmental health of these young people, and millions of children across this nation.

determined that we had
Let me begin by saying once again -- I am for a balanced budget. But I believe we must balance the budget in the way that reflects our most fundamental values: increasing opportunity; asking all Americans to assume responsibility; strengthening our families and the economy; recognizing the duty we owe each other, to our parents, to those who need and deserve our help, and most importantly, to our children.

balance the budget in a way that
Perhaps the most important thing we can do to fulfill that obligation to our children is to do everything in our power to protect their health. A big part of that is eliminating environmental hazards. That means making sure the water, food, air, and earth our children depend on are safe and clean.

In the past weeks, we have talked to the American people about how Republican budget cuts in education and Medicaid would deny the chance of a good education and quality health care to millions of our children. Now, we have stark evidence that cuts in environmental protections may put their very lives in danger.

health, their safety, and the future in danger.
EPA Administrator Carol Browner has just presented a report to me and the Vice President which outlines this Administration's extraordinary progress in protecting the environmental health of this nation's children. And it concludes with a warning we must not ignore: Republican budget cuts to EPA's public health and environmental enforcement functions will place our children at risk. I will not let that happen.

protection
In the three years of this Administration, we have made

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Brian Burke
We should not have a pay or debt - but we should not - safety - health - & opport. The - safest rate
We want our children to receive medical care because prevention - but Republicans would deny him so he can't get 2-4 million
child educational esp. for this can succeed

deny education from pre-school to
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college school - to hundreds of thousands of
children -
and we ~~want~~ our children should be

② We want ~~our~~ parents to be able to
provide basics of life but under Red
\$ million of the hardest-pressed
working fam. would pay more in
taxes.

But there is nothing more precious we want for kids
than health - Medicaid - not only
from healt but environment they live in.
~~Progress~~ not just adults
my da has been delirious
but Rep. budget would

considerable progress in protecting the health of our children. It is important to remember that children are not just little adults. They are still developing. And exposure to pollution can impair that development. They are also more exposed because they eat more food, breathe more air, and drink more water per body weight than adults. And the little ones are more prone to crawl on the ground and put things in their mouths.

Pesticide exposure is a significant concern. ~~Each year, more than 100,000 children are involved in common household pesticide-related poisonings. And tens of thousands of children accidentally ingest pesticides.~~ In response to a 1993 report from the National Academy of Sciences on children and pesticides, we took aggressive action to reduce pesticide risks to children and all Americans. We have stepped up our research on the risk of pesticides to children and we have launched a major effort to reduce pesticide use and pesticide risk nationwide.

This Administration has taken many other actions to protect the environmental health of our children. We strengthened our enforcement of environmental laws and took action to reduce air pollution, reduce children's exposure to lead, accelerate toxic waste cleanups and expand the public's right-to-know about toxic chemicals in their neighborhoods. But more needs to be done. That's why my budget makes a strong commitment to protecting children from environmental hazards.

We want our children to be able to eat food that is safe
The Republican budget, on the other hand, threatens our ability to continue our progress and meet the challenges of the future in protecting children's health. *so they can*

But
Their cuts in standard-setting would impede our efforts to set new standards for pesticides in food, contaminants in drinking water, and dangerous air pollution.

We want to better understand complex ways -
Their cuts in science and technology would delay vital research on children's health, including our research on the effects of pesticides on children. Walking away from this vital research would put another generation of children at risk.

We want - toxic waste
Their cuts in environmental enforcement may result in more tragedies like the recent case of two children who died when they crawled into a dumpster where toxic waste had been illegally dumped. Mothers should not have to worry that their children may climb over a fence and be exposed to toxic waste. Yet, one in four Americans lives within four miles of a toxic waste dump.

Republican budget cuts would also impede our efforts to provide safe drinking water to our children and all Americans. ~~Drinking water contaminants pose a special risk to infants, who live almost exclusively on fluids and whose immune systems cannot effectively fight off microbial contaminants.~~

For part three 3 years we have - NAB
but republicans would force us to
find that study -
Pete - today or tomorrow
Janetta - Todd Stern - we need more
Congressional in tone season 8
Children

**PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF CHILDREN FROM ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS:
A PROGRESS REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT**

**Carol M. Browner
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**

December 18, 1995

PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF CHILDREN FROM ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS: A PROGRESS REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Protecting Our Children Is Fundamental

Protecting our children is among the Clinton Administration's highest priorities. Healthy children and families are fundamental to our nation. Protecting our environment is critical to our children's health today, and lays the groundwork for a healthier future for their generation, and for generations to come. As a nation, we should be very concerned about children's health, due to environmental hazards. This progress report reviews the reasons why children are particularly vulnerable to environmental hazards; summarizes the Clinton Administration's accomplishments in protecting children from environmental health risks; identifies critical unmet needs; and describes how the Administration's current and future efforts to protect children's environmental health are threatened by Congressional budget cuts. We are deeply concerned that these cuts would prevent us from securing our children's future.

Children Are Particularly Vulnerable to Environmental Health Risks

When it comes to their health and development, children are not just little adults. The National Academy of Sciences has pointed out on more than one occasion that this also holds true when it comes to exposure to environmental pollutants. Children are particularly at risk from environmental hazards in three ways:

- 1) through susceptibility due to their rapid changes in growth and development, immature body organs and tissues, and weaker immune systems in infancy;
- 2) through greater exposure, because they consume more food, drink more water, and breathe more air for their body weight than adults do, and so can be more exposed to hazards;
- 3) behaviorally, because they explore more, crawl on the floor or the ground, and mouth objects not intended for eating.

The Clinton Administration Has Acted to Protect Children from Environmental Risks

In 1993, the Clinton Administration took unprecedented steps to protect the health of children from the growing threat posed by pesticides in their food. Responding swiftly to recommendations in the National Academy of Sciences' 1993 report, *Pesticides in the Diets of Infants and Children*, the Administration committed to ensuring the safety of foods our children eat by considering children's unique exposures and risks, and by reducing the overall use and risks of pesticides in the United States. The Administration reaffirmed its commitment to the value of a healthy, balanced diet for children -- and pledged we would look at all opportunities to protect public health, particularly where children are concerned.

In the two years since the Academy report was issued, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has intensified its efforts to reduce the use of high-risk pesticides; to increase the research and testing needed to learn more about children's exposure to pesticides in food; and to establish new standards to protect children and infants from dietary health risks posed by pesticides. Neurological testing and study of the effects on children's endocrine and immune systems also have begun.

Because children and infants can be more susceptible -- and more exposed to -- a wide variety of environmental health risks, the Clinton Administration did not stop with food safety in our efforts to protect children's health. Children's health issues are a high priority across the full spectrum of the Environmental Protection Agency's work in drinking water protections; toxic waste cleanups; toxic air pollution reductions; protections for rivers, lakes and streams; safety controls for toxic chemicals used at home; lead poisoning prevention; enforcement of environmental laws; and, most critically, the best scientific research to answer the many questions that remain about how children's health is affected by environmental problems.

While accounting for children's health risks is a common practice in medicine, it has not traditionally been widely applied in assessing risks from environmental hazards. To change that practice at the national level, EPA announced on October 23, 1995, that -- for the first time ever -- Agency assessments of environmental risks will consistently and explicitly take into account health risks to children and infants from environmental hazards. This new policy directly responds to issues raised by the National Academy of Sciences 1993 report, and is an extension of Administrator Browner's efforts to make children's health a priority throughout the Agency.

More Remains to be Done

Perhaps the most pressing challenge that remains in our efforts to protect children's environmental health is adequate scientific research on children's environmental health issues, so that our nation's decisions about protecting children will be based on the best information possible. Currently, research on children is so scarce that most current protections are based on data from adults. EPA's new policy to explicitly consider children's health risks in all Agency assessments of environmental hazards is expected to give rise to more scientific research on child-specific susceptibility and exposure to environmental pollutants.

As new data emerge from this research, it must be used to re-evaluate and set new, more protective health-based standards for drinking water contaminants, pesticides in food, toxic chemicals, air pollutants, and other hazardous substances that affect children. Enforcement and compliance assurance efforts will need to take into account new and emerging information about children's health risks, to ensure that new standards will be met. In many cases, new pollution prevention initiatives can be targeted to help children avoid the risks presented by environmental problems. New research also can be used to educate health professionals, parents, and teachers about the disproportionate health risks children face from environmental hazards.

Progress in Protecting Children is Threatened by Budget Cuts

Taken together, the many initiatives and new policies issued by the Clinton Administration to protect children's environmental health are sweeping and unprecedented. Yet today, our ability to meet our commitments to protect children from environmental health problems is itself threatened. Two years after we firmly pledged to ensure appropriate health protection for children from pesticides in their diets, proposed Congressional budget cuts will limit our ability to respond at an acceptable pace to the National Academy of Sciences recommendations. And in other key areas such as drinking water, clean water, air pollution, research, toxic waste cleanups and enforcement, proposed budget cuts threaten our ability to protect the nation's children from the environmental hazards that adversely impact their health.

PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF CHILDREN FROM ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS: A PROGRESS REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT

I. Children Are Particularly Vulnerable to Environmental Health Risks

When it comes to their health and development, children are not just little adults. The National Academy of Sciences has pointed out on more than one occasion that this also holds true when it comes to exposure to environmental pollutants. Children are particularly at risk from environmental hazards in three ways:

First, **children are still growing and developing.** They move through several stages of rapid growth and development, from infancy through adolescence. Exposure to toxic substances can affect their growth, impair development of their nervous systems, and cause abnormal development because of hormonal or immunologic effects. Infants' immune systems are less well developed, so they are less able than healthy adults to fight off emerging microbial threats such as cryptosporidium in drinking water.

Second, **children are more exposed to environmental hazards than adults.** They eat more calories, drink more water and breathe more air for their body weight than adults do, and thus may ingest more pollutants per pound of body weight. They eat different foods -- particularly fresh produce -- and larger amounts for their body weight than adults. Their immature skin and body tissues more easily absorb many harmful substances.

Third, **young children's behavior exposes them to different environmental hazards.** Their natural curiosity and tendency to explore leaves them open to health risks adults can more easily avoid. When young children crawl on the ground or the floor, or mouth toys and other objects, they are more exposed to dust and soil; lead paint; household chemicals; garden chemicals; and other potentially hazardous substances.

Although we know that keeping children healthy means healthier adults in the long run, we lack adequate research on children's environmental health issues, so that most current protections are based on data from adults. EPA's new policy to explicitly consider children's health risks in all Agency assessments of environmental hazards is expected to give rise to more scientific research on child-specific susceptibility and exposure to environmental pollutants, and is designed to base the Agency's health-protective decisions on the best scientific research possible. Appendix C includes the complete text of the policy.

Despite the many unanswered questions that remain about precisely how environmental hazards affect children's health, the amassing evidence suggests that children's health is increasingly at risk from pollution and other environmental problems. For example:

- **Asthma** is on the rise in children and young people, **increasing by a dramatic 42% between 1980 and 1987**. Many of the six most common air pollutants can cause or contribute to respiratory illnesses, including asthma. More than one in three Americans live in an area where the air is unhealthy to breathe.
- **Lead poisoning** remains widespread at low levels among American children, **affecting as many as 1.7 million children age five and under**. Although lead-based paint has long since been taken off the market, children in older homes are threatened by chipping or peeling lead paint, or excessive amounts of lead-contaminated dust. **More than 80 percent of homes built before 1980 -- some 60 million -- contain lead paint**. Lead poisoning in children causes IQ deficiencies, reading and learning disabilities, impaired hearing, reduced attention spans, hyperactivity and behavior problems.
- **Pesticides** pose a risk for children both as a household chemical and in food, particularly given the higher amounts of fresh produce children consume. Some pesticides can cause cancer, central nervous system damage, or respiratory illness. **Each year, more than 100,000 children accidentally ingest pesticides**. EPA receives an average of 24,000 pesticide-hotline calls each year, two-thirds of which are from parents concerned about pesticides' dietary or household risks for children.
- **Drinking water** contaminants pose a risk particularly to infants, who drink more fluids per pound of body weight -- and whose immature immune systems cannot effectively fight off microbial contaminants like cryptosporidium. **Last year, a total of 30 million Americans drank water from systems that violated one or more public health standards -- and roughly 13 million of them are served by systems that don't protect against microbial contaminants.**
- **Polluted waters** not only affect children who swim, but those that eat fish. All over America, signs are posted near thousands of rivers, lakes and streams warning that children and other sensitive groups should not eat fish caught in the water because of contamination. **From January to September 1994, some 1,500 fish advisories had been posted -- with 73 percent of them related to mercury contamination**. Hundreds of beaches are closed each summer due to raw sewage and other contamination.

- **Toxic waste:** Mothers shouldn't have to worry that their children may climb over a fence and be exposed to toxic waste, yet **one in four Americans lives within four miles of a toxic waste dump -- including 9.8 million children.**
- **Cancer-causing PCBs**, or polychlorinated biphenyls, were banned by EPA in 1976; some 20 years later, however, this toxic chemical continues to persist in the environment, often in contaminated fish. PCBs also can concentrate at higher levels in breast milk, posing a risk to nursing infants. **Children whose mothers are exposed to PCBs when pregnant may develop learning disabilities and experience delayed development.**

As a nation, we must remain vigilant about protecting children's health from these and other risks posed by environmental hazards.

II. The Clinton Administration Has Acted to Protect Children from Environmental Health Risks

A. Reducing Children's Health Risks From Pesticides in Food

A 1993 National Academy of Sciences report, *Pesticides in the Diets of Infants and Children*, concluded that then-current scientific and regulatory approaches did not adequately protect infants and children from pesticide residues in food. The Academy called on EPA to make significant changes in assessing exposure to pesticides, in analyzing the potential for harmful or toxic effects, and in using these data to characterize actual risks. Thus, the Academy report provided a major challenge to EPA to improve the safety of our food supply and provide greater assurance that our children are protected. In 1993, the Clinton Administration moved aggressively to respond to the Academy report with a sweeping joint effort by EPA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Food and Drug Administration to carry out the Academy recommendations.

Going beyond the recommendations, the Clinton Administration also launched a major effort to improve the safety of food for children, while the work to carry out the Academy's recommendations is underway. That effort includes two major components:

- **Reducing the Use -- and Risks -- of Pesticides Now:** To speed the reduction of pesticide use -- even while awaiting the results of new and emerging scientific data -- EPA, FDA and USDA have pledged to take several steps to reduce pesticide use overall. These include: ensuring the availability of cost-effective methods of integrated pest management as an alternative to traditional pesticides; encouraging the use of biological pesticides and other alternatives; and working to achieve the goal that 75 percent of U.S. agricultural acreage will use some form of integrated pest management by the year 2000. EPA has established a cooperative partnership with more than 40 pesticide users -- including growers, utilities, and non-agricultural associations -- to reduce environmental health risks from pesticides through laboratory research and improved management systems. Many of these partnerships are with growers of foods that children eat frequently, including potatoes, apples, citrus fruits, pears, peaches and tomatoes.
- **Getting Safer Pesticides on the Market Faster:** EPA has greatly accelerated its reregistration program for reevaluating and reducing risks associated with the older, often more toxic pesticides that are in use now. Reevaluations are being done at a rate of 40 per year and are complete for 121 pesticide chemical cases, covering 65 percent of pesticide use in the U.S. In 1995, EPA has significantly increased its registrations of new, "safer" or reduced risk pesticides. Twenty-four new active ingredients that

are biopesticides or reduced risk pesticide ingredients were approved for use, quadrupling the rate of approval of safer pesticides.

Among the specific actions the Clinton Administration has taken to respond directly to the Academy recommendations -- and to protect children from health risks related to pesticides in food -- are the following:

- **Improving Scientific Knowledge About Children's Exposure to Pesticides:** The Academy recommended improvements in monitoring and tracking pesticide residues on the food children most frequently eat. Since 1993, EPA, FDA, and USDA and the states of California and Florida have designed a National Pesticide Residue Database to compile in one place all data on pesticide residues gathered from monitoring of food throughout the U.S. The Academy recommended this step to provide a more reliable picture of pesticide residues in our food. FDA and USDA food monitoring programs have been redesigned to emphasize monitoring of food that is particularly important in children's diets, such as pears, apples, tomatoes, rice, and peas. USDA, HHS, and EPA are designing new surveys to improve our knowledge of what infants and children eat. And EPA is also improving its methods of analyzing the component parts of food as it is eaten (e.g., pizza is made up of wheat, tomatoes and milk) so that exposure to pesticide residues can be estimated more reliably.
- **Conducting Better Assessment of Risks Unique to Children:** The Academy recommended a full assessment of unique risks to children because of growth and developmental vulnerabilities. EPA is requiring pesticide and chemical manufacturers to conduct new tests needed to assess potential toxic effects of pesticides on the immune system, the nervous system, reproduction and development, and the visual system of children. Development of a long-term research strategy on age-related differences in human susceptibility to environmental toxics is underway and expected to be completed in 1996.
- **Combining Exposures of Chemicals with the Same Mode of Action:** The Academy noted that many pesticides on the market act in the same or similar ways -- both in their effectiveness as pest controls, and in the health effects they cause in humans. Yet the EPA regulates these chemicals one at a time. EPA has begun to phase in an assessment process that will fully capture the combined risk posed by such chemicals, starting with a special review for the triazine herbicides.

- **Basing Pesticides Standards on Children's Actual Exposures:** The Academy recommended that EPA take into account children's unique dietary patterns when setting pesticide standards and registrations. EPA now routinely considers dietary risk to infants and children in registering and re-registering pesticides. In some cases, the Agency determines that risks to children are unacceptable, resulting in the denial of permission to use certain pesticides.

The Academy also recommended that EPA account for other exposures to the same pesticides found in children's diets, to create a more complete picture of the unique risks children face. EPA now uses an approach to risk assessment that examines children's multiple routes of exposure to pesticides at home and in schools, as well as in food. EPA also has developed a new method for assessing acute -- or short-term -- exposures to toxic pesticides, improving the Agency's ability to prevent children from being exposed to pesticide residues that can cause illness after only a single serving of the food is consumed.

The complete list of recommendations and actions taken to date by the EPA is shown in Appendix A. The Academy also indicated a need for more basic scientific research to assist in the effort to reduce health risks to children from pesticides. Appendix B gives an update on EPA's progress in developing a long-range research plan focused on children and pesticides risks.

Challenges Ahead for Protecting Children from Pesticides

In the two years since the Academy Report was published, EPA, in cooperation with FDA, USDA, and other Federal and State agencies, has made substantial progress in improving protection of children from pesticide risks. But much more remains to be done, including:

- improvements in exposure information, such as a system to standardize data on the pesticides residues in the top 20 foods eaten by children;
- improving the available data on children's dietary patterns to include more up-to-date information and more precise data on age-related differences in children's diets;
- basic scientific research on the unique susceptibilities of children;
- risk assessments that take multiple exposures to related chemicals into account;
- incorporation of the best new and emerging scientific information in Agency decisions to better protect children; and
- providing more public information and education as new information emerges.

B. Reducing Children's Health Risks in Other Key Environmental Areas

Because children and infants can be more susceptible -- and more exposed to -- a wide variety of environmental health risks, the Clinton Administration did not stop with food safety in our efforts to protect children's health over the past two years. Children's health issues are a high priority across the full spectrum of the Environmental Protection Agency's work in drinking water protection; toxic waste cleanups; toxic air pollution reduction; protection of rivers, lakes and streams; safety controls for toxic chemicals used at home; lead poisoning prevention; enforcement of environmental laws; and research to answer the many questions that remain about how children's health is affected by environmental problems. Below is an overview of the areas in which, under President Clinton's leadership, EPA has made children's health considerations a priority in our efforts to protect public health and the environment:

New Across-the-Board Policy on Evaluating Environmental Health Risks to Children

While accounting for the special health risks facing children is a common practice in medicine, it has not traditionally been widely applied in assessing risks from environmental hazards. To change that practice at the national level, EPA announced on October 23, 1995, that -- for the first time ever -- Agency assessments of environmental risks will consistently and explicitly take into account health risks to children and infants from environmental hazards. This new policy, sponsored by the Agency's Science Policy Council, directly responds to issues raised by the National Academy of Sciences 1993 report, and is an extension of Administrator Browner's efforts to make children's health a priority throughout the Agency.

Protecting Infants from Microbial Contaminants in Drinking Water

Drinking water contaminants pose a particular risk to infants, who drink more fluids per pound of body weight -- and whose immature immune systems cannot effectively fight off microbial contaminants like cryptosporidium. Last year, a total of 30 million Americans drank water from systems that violated one or more public health standards; roughly 13 million of them are served by systems that don't protect against microbial contaminants. In Milwaukee in 1993, hundreds of thousands of residents became severely ill and 100 -- including children -- died after the drinking water became contaminated with cryptosporidium.

To ensure that the drinking water is safe for children, our highest priority today is control of microbial contaminants, most notably cryptosporidium. Through the Safe Drinking Water Action Agenda, the Clinton Administration has taken the following steps to reduce health risks from microbial contaminants in drinking water systems across the nation:

- Established the first-ever state revolving fund to help achieve safer drinking water through funds that go straight to the states for loans to communities with drinking water treatment facilities in need of upgrades and

improvements. From 1994 through 1996, the President has proposed a total of \$1.8 billion for this purpose;

- Targeted safety standards and available resources to contaminants that pose the greatest threats to human health, such as microbial contaminants, including cryptosporidium;
- Proposed a requirement for large water systems to test source water -- and, in some cases, treated water -- for cryptosporidium beginning in late 1995. Data from this 18-month test will help develop new safety rules and standards to protect further against cryptosporidium;
- Launched a Partnership for Safe Water with the nation's water suppliers in March 1995, to achieve voluntary improvements in surface water filtration plants around the nation. Filtration substantially reduces--but does not entirely eliminate--cryptosporidium contamination;
- Participated in scientific efforts to find answers about deadly parasites like cryptosporidium, including how we can better test for it, how people are exposed to it through water, and whether a treatment to eliminate it from drinking water will someday be possible.

Protecting Children from Toxic Air Pollution and Lead Poisoning

One of the greatest accomplishments in protecting children's environmental health was EPA's ban on lead in gasoline and the Consumer Product Safety Commission's ban on lead in paint -- resulting in a 98% reduction in lead levels in the air, protecting millions of children from serious, permanent learning disabilities by helping to reduce blood lead levels by 75%.

Today, however, lead poisoning remains widespread at low levels among American children, affecting as many as 1.7 million children age five and under. Although lead-based paint has long since been taken off the market, children in older homes are threatened by chipping or peeling lead paint, or excessive amounts of lead-contaminated dust. More than 80 percent of homes built before 1980 contain lead paint. Even at low levels, lead poisoning in children causes IQ deficiencies, reading and learning disabilities, impaired hearing, reduced attention spans, hyperactivity and behavior problems.

To address this most pressing remaining need in lead poisoning prevention, EPA works with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to achieve abatement of lead paint remaining in the nation's housing. In the Clinton Administration, this initiative has expanded to include removals of hazardous lead paint from housing where children live, or are likely to live; research on lead poisoning and lead abatement; training and certification of lead removal workers

to ensure effective abatement; public education on the health risks posed by lead paint, particularly targeted to parents and children; and enforcement efforts.

Asthma -- both individual episodes and asthma-related deaths -- is on the rise in children and young people, increasing by a dramatic 42% between 1980 and 1987. Many of the six most common air pollutants, such as smog and sulfur dioxide, can cause or contribute to respiratory illnesses, including asthma. More than one in three Americans live in an area where the air is unhealthy to breathe.

EPA develops health-protective standards that set safe limits for concentrations of the six most widespread pollutants, which are linked to several serious health and environmental problems, some of which have clear links to children's health, including:

- ground-level ozone (smog), which causes and contributes to respiratory illness and lung damage;
- sulfur dioxide, which causes increased respiratory illness, especially in asthmatics;
- nitrogen dioxide, which causes lung tissue damage and increases respiratory illness, and also contributes to formation of smog; and
- lead, which causes infant mortality, reduced birth weight, and childhood IQ loss.

The Clinton Administration has continued its strong commitment to helping the areas with the greatest air pollution to reduce these six most common toxic air pollutants. The Administration also has issued new, more protective controls on air emissions from incinerators that burn hazardous waste -- a process that can result in emissions of dioxins, a family of highly toxic chemicals that causes cancer in animals. The 99% reductions in dioxin emissions achieved by these rules have special protective benefits for nursing infants, because dioxins and other bioaccumulative chemicals concentrate in higher levels in breast milk.

Ongoing research sponsored by the Administration is expected to provide new information critical to understanding of how air pollution affects the development of asthma in children. A special effort is planned to fund research that will focus on the link between health effects and exposure to toxic urban air pollution. EPA will fund studies that identify whether special subpopulations -- such as infants and children -- are at increased health risks due to higher exposure to toxic urban air pollution, or due to their inherent biological sensitivities.

Protecting Mothers and Infants from Contaminated Fish and Polluted Waters

Polluted waters affect not only children who swim, but those who eat fish. All over America, signs are posted near thousands of rivers, lakes and streams warning that children and other sensitive groups should not eat fish caught in the water because of contamination. From January to September 1994, some 1,500 such advisories had been posted -- with 73 percent of them related to mercury contamination in the fish. Cancer-causing PCBs, or polychlorinated biphenyls, were banned by EPA in 1976; some 20 years later, however, this toxic chemical

continues to persist in the environment, often in contaminated fish. Children whose mothers are exposed to PCBs when pregnant may develop learning disabilities and experience delayed development, and chemicals such as PCBs also tend to bioaccumulate in breast milk.

The Great Lakes Water Quality Initiative is a landmark effort to establish consistent, common-sense, cost-effective guidelines to protect public health and the environment from the toxic pollutants in the Great Lakes, which constitute 95% of the nation's fresh water and provide drinking water for 23 million Americans. By providing standards for the Great Lakes, the Clinton Administration has acted to protect most of the nation's fresh water, addressing the long-term toxic pollution that persists in the Great Lakes, leading to problems like fish contamination, drinking water contamination, and beach closures due to sewage, which pose particular health risks to mothers and children.

To keep our rivers, lakes and streams clean -- especially those that serve as a source of drinking water or a source of fish for eating -- President Clinton's FY96 budget provided \$1.6 billion in funds for states to build wastewater treatment plants that keep raw sewage from flowing into our rivers, lakes and streams.

Protecting Children from Exposure to Carelessly Dumped Toxic Waste

Parents shouldn't have to worry that their children may climb over a fence and be exposed to toxic waste, yet one in four Americans lives within four miles of a toxic waste dump. Recently in Florida, two children died because they inhaled a toxic chemical illegally dumped near an open lot where they were playing.

To clean up toxic waste sites, the Clinton Administration has redirected Superfund to make it faster, fairer and more efficient. Cleanups have been dramatically accelerated: In the past two years, nearly as many Superfund cleanups were completed in 12 months than in the program's entire first decade.

III. Progress in Protecting Children from Environmental Health Risks is Threatened by Budget Cuts

Taken together, the many initiatives and new policies issued by the Clinton Administration to protect children's environmental health are sweeping and unprecedented. Yet today, our ability to meet our commitments to protect children from environmental health problems is itself threatened. Two years after we firmly pledged to ensure appropriate health protection for children from pesticides in their diets, proposed Congressional budget cuts will limit our ability to respond at an acceptable pace to the National Academy of Sciences recommendations. And in other key areas such as drinking water, clean water, toxic waste cleanup, clean air, research, and enforcement, proposed budget cuts threaten our ability to protect the nation's children from the environmental hazards that adversely impact their health.

1) The Congressional budget cuts by 17% (\$310 million) funds to set and enforce environmental and public health standards for air pollution, pesticides, and clean and safe water -- all areas of environmental harm that affect children. The President's budget protects children overall by protecting them from pollution, which can affect their health more severely than it does adults. In addition, the President's budget includes funding for specific actions that would set new standards to protect children from pesticides in food, contaminants in drinking water, and dangerous air pollutants. The President's budget also includes a third year of funding with \$2.3 million in FY96 for standard-setting as part of the Administration's initiative on pesticides and children.

Budget cuts also will hamper actions to protect children with new information. Reductions to EPA's budget will delay our efforts to require manufacturers of pesticides to develop critical new data, evaluate those data, and translate the results of the evaluations into regulatory actions that increase protection of infants and children.

2) The Congressional budget reduces environmental science and technology funds by 22%, a cut of \$150 million. These cuts could cause delays in vital, cutting-edge research on children's environmental health which would result in putting yet another generation of children at risk.

President Clinton's environmental research budget makes children's environmental health a priority, including \$25 million for research on ground-level ozone (smog), which causes and contributes to respiratory illness and lung damage; \$5.5 million for research as part of the initiative on children and

5) The Congressional budget cuts by 30% funds that go straight to the states to help keep raw sewage off beaches and out of waterways (-\$462 million).

This cut not only poses a greater health threat to children whose drinking water comes from polluted rivers, lakes and streams, but to any children whose parents take them to the beach or swimming, boating or fishing in rivers and lakes.

President Clinton's FY96 budget provides \$1.6 billion in funds for states to build treatment plants that keep raw sewage from flowing into our waterways.

6) The Congressional budget cuts funding of hazardous waste site cleanups by 25 percent (-\$400 million). A funding cut at this level would restrict and slow the Administration's efforts to make the Superfund program faster, fairer and more efficient for the one in four Americans -- including 9.8 million American children -- who live near a toxic waste dump.

We are deeply concerned that cuts of this magnitude would prevent us from securing our children's future. In particular, these cuts would undermine the foundation the Clinton Administration has built to provide special attention to children's unique environmental health needs. Environmental hazards are not momentary. In many cases, pollution today results in pollution decades -- even centuries -- later. Along the way, generations of children are needlessly exposed to health risks.

For example, millions of American children live in housing where lead poisoning poses a direct risk to their health; every year, hundreds of thousands of those children are newly poisoned with dangerous levels of lead in their blood. Each week of delay in taking action on lead contamination -- a problem we can prevent -- can mean that thousands of children are needlessly poisoned.

Cuts to EPA's research, enforcement efforts, and efforts to set health-based and environmental standards will place our nation's children at risk, today and for generations to come. The Clinton Administration has acted swiftly and aggressively to make protection of children a priority, with sound and positive results in just two years. We believe that we must continue to act on behalf of children faced with environmental health risks. While the Clinton Administration will continue to work aggressively to protect children's health with those resources provided, we believe that the Congressional budget cuts will not allow us to fully provide these vital protections that mean so much to the future of our children and our nation.

REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT ON THREATS TO CHILDREN'S HEALTH FROM ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Protecting Our Children Is Fundamental

We know that, in the long run, healthier children mean healthier adults -- a great benefit for our nation and our families. Protecting our environment helps protect our children's health today, and lays the groundwork for a healthier future for not only their generation, but generations to come.

Children Are Particularly Vulnerable to Environmental Health Risks

When it comes to their health and development, children are not just little adults. The National Academy of Sciences has pointed out on more than one occasion that this also holds true when it comes to exposure to environmental pollutants. Children are particularly at risk from environmental hazards in three ways:

- 1) through susceptibility due to their rapid changes in growth and development, immature body organs and tissues, and weaker immune systems in infancy;
- 2) through greater exposure, because they consume more food and drink and breathe more air for their body weight than adults do, and so can be more exposed to hazards;
- 3) behaviorally, because they explore more, crawl on the floor or the ground, and mouth objects not intended for eating.

The Clinton Administration Has Acted to Protect Children from Environmental Health Risks

In 1993, the Clinton Administration took unprecedented steps to protect the health of children from the growing threat posed by pesticides in their food. Responding swiftly to recommendations in the National Academy of Sciences' 1993 report, *Pesticides in the Diets of Infants and Children*, the Administration committed to ensuring the safety of foods our children eat by reducing the overall use of pesticides in the United States. The Administration reaffirmed its commitment to the value of a healthy, balanced diet for children -- and pledged we would look at all opportunities to protect public health, particularly where children are concerned.

In the two and one-half years since the Academy report was issued and this path-breaking Administration initiative began, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has intensified its efforts to reduce the use of high-risk pesticides; to increase the research and testing needed to learn more about children's exposure to pesticides in food; and to establish new standards to protect children and infants from dietary health risks posed by pesticides.

Yet, because all children and infants are more susceptible -- and more exposed to -- environmental health risks of all types, we did not stop with food safety in our efforts to protect children's health. Children's health issues are a high priority across the full spectrum of the Environmental Protection Agency's work in drinking water protections; toxic air pollution reductions; protections for rivers, lakes and streams; safety controls for toxic chemicals used at home; lead poisoning prevention; enforcement of environmental laws of all types; and, most critically, the best scientific research to answer the many questions that remain in our knowledge base about how children's health is affected by environmental problems.

While accounting for children's health risks is a common practice in medicine, it has not traditionally been widely applied in assessing risks from environmental hazards. To change that practice at the national level, EPA announced on October 23, 1995, that -- for the first time ever -- Agency assessments of environmental risks will consistently and explicitly take into account health risks to children and infants from environmental hazards. This new policy directly responds to issues raised by the National Academy of Sciences 1993 report, and is an extension of Administrator Browner's efforts to make children's health a priority throughout the Agency.

More Remains to be Done

Perhaps the most pressing challenge that remains in our efforts to protect children's environmental health is adequate scientific research on children's environmental health issues, so that our nation's decisions about protecting children will be based on the best information possible. Currently, data on children is so scarce that most current protections are based on data from adults. EPA's new policy to explicitly consider children's health risks in all Agency assessments of environmental hazards is expected to give rise to more scientific research on child-specific susceptibility and exposure to environmental pollutants of all types.

As new data emerge from this research, it must be used to re-evaluate and set new, more protective health-based standards for drinking water contaminants, pesticides in food, toxic chemicals, air pollutants, and other hazardous substances that affect children. Enforcement and compliance assurance efforts will need to take into account new and emerging information about children's health risks, to ensure that new standards will be met. In many cases, new pollution prevention initiatives can be targeted to help children avoid the risks presented by environmental problems. In addition, the results of new research must be used to educate health professionals, parents, and teachers about the disproportionate health risks children face from environmental hazards.

Progress in Protecting Children from Environmental Health Risks is Threatened by Budget Cuts

Taken together, the many initiatives and new policies issued by the Clinton Administration to protect children's environmental health are sweeping and unprecedented. Yet today, our ability to meet our commitments to protect children -- those who are highly vulnerable and unable to protect themselves -- from environmental health problems is itself threatened. Two and one-half years after we firmly pledged to ensure appropriate health protection for children from pesticides in their diets, proposed Congressional budget cuts in our research and development funds alone will limit our ability to respond at an acceptable pace to the National Academy of Sciences recommendations. And in key areas such as drinking water, clean water, air pollution, research, and enforcement, proposed budget cuts threaten our ability to meet our responsibility to protect the nation's children from the environmental hazards that adversely impact their health in ways that are dramatically different from adults.

JAMESTOWN ELEMENTARY

Dr. Nikki Smith, Principal
3700 North Delaware Street
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DRAFT

Jamestown Elementary, a middle school in Northern Virginia, has successfully intertwined the importance of environmental and public health protection into every aspect of the school's curriculum. Jamestown is a member of the GLOBE Program -- an international, hands-on environmental science and education program that joins students and scientists from around the world in studying global environment. Through the GLOBE Program, the school's 5th graders compare notes about environmental observations, such as the daily air and water temperature, with students and scientists around the world via the Internet. Through this experiment, the children learn that the interdependence of the different atmosphere around the world. Overall, the school emphasizes the importance to students of all ages that preventing pollution is not only good to protect their environment and their own health, but that its the right thing to do.

Maureen Herman's 5th Grade Science Class

Maureen Herman, the school's science teacher, provides the children with hands-on experiments to show them that a clean and safe environment is dependent upon everyone taking action to both prevent pollution, and clean it up. For instance, the students studied and tested the water in a nearby stream and discovered it contained high levels of pollutants. They then learned, through reading scientific studies, that water pollution affects the surrounding habitat of the stream, including the fish, vegetation, animals and people. For instance, they read a study that pollution will reduce the size and health of new-born fish, but after the pollution is cleaned up, the fish are born at normal size. Maureen Herman has also taught the kids that streams like the one they studied don't have to be polluted, and that someday, with their help, every stream might be free of pollution.

REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT ON CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH: SUMMARY AND BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Summary of Report:

EPA Administrator Carol M. Browner is preparing to present a report to the President on the impact of environmental problems on children's health. The report will:

- 1) Review the important health risks children face because they are more exposed than adults to environmental contaminants in air, food, dirt or drinking water, and are more susceptible to health problems from environmental problems.**
- 2) Look at the Clinton Administration's unprecedented efforts to protect children's health from environmental harm, in two sections:**
 - **A two-year progress report on steps we have taken to respond to the risks faced by children from pesticides in food, as detailed in the National Academy of Sciences' 1993 report. Our progress report includes information on new research, new testing requirements for pesticides, assessments of children's exposure to pesticides, and steps taken to reduce those exposures; and**
 - **A look at remaining challenges the nation faces in all areas where children's health is at risk from environmental harm, including asthma due to air pollution; drinking water contamination; lead poisoning; toxic waste dumping; and other areas. The report will note the need for further research, standard setting, enforcement of new standards, and public information to educate parents and teachers.**
- 3) Assess the Congressional budget cuts that will prevent Administration from fully delivering on its new commitments to protect children's environmental health.**

Summary of Budget Impact Analysis:

The final section of the report will, as noted above, assess the impact of Congressional budget cuts on the Administration's efforts to advance environmental health protections for children. The budget cuts adversely impact efforts to protect children's environmental health in five ways:

- 1) The Congressional budget cuts by 17% (or \$310 million) funds to set and enforce environmental and public health standards for air pollution, pesticides, and clean and safe water -- all areas of environmental harm that affect children. The President's budget protects children overall by protecting them from pollution, which can affect their health more severely than it does adults. In addition, the President's budget included funding for specific actions that would set new standards to protect children from pesticides in food, contaminants in drinking water, and dangerous air pollutants. The President's budget also included a third year of funding for the Administration's initiative on pesticides and children, with \$2.3 million in FY 96.**

From re-registering pesticides to ensure that they meet a level of safety protective of children, to issuing a new rule on tiny particles of air pollution that can cause increased lung disease -- an major issue for children, in whom asthma is dramatically on the rise -- the Clinton Administration's agenda of basic and new protections for children is threatened by the delays and cuts posed by the Congressional budget.

2) The Congressional budget reduces environmental science and technology funds by 22%, a cut of \$150 million. These cuts could cause delays in vital, cutting-edge research on children's environmental health which would result in putting yet another generation of children at risk. President Clinton's environmental research budget would have made children's environmental health a priority, including \$25 million for research on ground-level ozone (smog), which causes and contributes to respiratory illness and lung damage; \$7 million for research on particulate matter, the tiny particles of air pollution that can cause increased lung disease; \$5.5 million for a research initiative on children and pesticides; \$8.4 million for research to support new drinking water standards and controls on microbial contaminants; \$5 million for research on endocrine disruptors, which affect the development of reproductive systems; up to \$3 million for researchers at the nation's top institutions to explore children's exposure to pesticides; and funds for research on how and whether children are at increased health risk from toxic urban air pollutants.

3) The Congressional budget cuts include a 27% cut specifically in enforcement of all environmental programs (-\$114 million) from the President's FY96 budget -- meaning that the environmental cop won't be on the beat to help kids avoid health problems from pollution. President Clinton's budget supports strong enforcement of our nation's environmental laws and standards, protecting public health for children. The Congress has called for cuts in so-called "low-priority" enforcement. Though no one has defined "low-priority," the cuts might mean that EPA would not be able to pursue such small enforcement cases as the one last year in Florida, when two children died because toxic chemicals were carelessly dumped in a lot where the children played. A mother shouldn't have to worry that her children will climb over a fence and be exposed to toxic waste -- and she shouldn't have to worry that the environmental cop won't be there to protect her children.

Similarly, if the Clinton Administration wants to make good on its pledge to improve health standards on pesticides in food, in air pollution controls, in safer drinking water standards, in tamper-proof packaging of pesticides used in the home, we'll need strong enforcement and compliance assurance to make sure the standards are met -- something the Congressional budget won't allow in all cases.

3) The Congressional budget increases risk of drinking water problems with a 45% cut in state loan funds (-\$225 million). Infants are more susceptible to new and emerging microbial contaminants in drinking water such as cryptosporidium -- and because infants drink more fluids per unit of body weight than do adults, they face more exposure to such contaminants. President Clinton's FY96 budget request provided \$500 million in loan funds that would go straight to the states to upgrade facilities to ensure drinking water has been treated to eliminate contaminants.

4) The Congressional budget cuts by 30% funds that go straight to the states to help keep raw sewage off beaches and out of waterways (-\$462 million). This cut not only poses a greater health threat to children whose drinking water comes from polluted rivers, lakes and streams, but to any children whose parents take them to the beach or swimming, boating or fishing in rivers and lakes. President Clinton's FY96 budget provided \$1.6 billion in funds for states to build treatment plants that keep raw sewage from flowing into our rivers, lakes and streams.



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF
THE ADMINISTRATOR

TO:

Terry Edwards
456 - 5709

FROM:

Ellen Cassidy
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COMMENTS:

hope this is helpful!

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Talking Points -- Children's Health Risks
White House Event -- December 18, 1995

Today I presented to the President a report from EPA on children's environmental health risks. I want to summarize for you what the report says.

Children are particularly vulnerable to environmental health risks.

Children are not just little adults.

They are still developing. Exposure to pollution can impair their development.

They are more exposed because they eat more food per body weight, breathe more air per body weight, drink more water per body weight.

Their behavior is different: They have a different diet, crawl around on the ground, put things in their mouths.

We have evidence that children's health is increasingly at risk from environmental problems.

Pesticide exposure is a significant concern. Two years ago, the National Academy of Sciences report called on EPA to address risks to children of pesticide residues on food.

Asthma is on the rise in children -- it increased by 42% between 1980 and 1987.

Contaminants in drinking water pose a particular risk to infants, who drink more per body weight and whose immature immune systems cannot fend off microbial contaminants.

Polluted water is a particular risk to children who eat fish, children who swim.

Lead poisoning remains a concern. Three million children have significant amounts of lead in their blood.

Children continue to be at risk from toxic waste sites that remain to be cleaned up.

PCB's persist in the environment; children whose mothers are exposed during pregnancy may have developmental problems.

The Clinton Administration's EPA has made protecting children's health a priority.

In response to the 1993 report from the National Academy of Sciences on children and pesticides, the Clinton Administration took aggressive action to reduce pesticide risks to children and all Americans.

- . EPA accelerated evaluation of older pesticides and registration of newer, safer pesticides.

- . EPA launched a major effort to gather reliable data on children's exposure and risk.

- . In June of 1993, the Clinton Administration announced an inter-agency policy to reduce pesticide use and pesticide risk nationwide.

- . EPA launched a Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program to work with growers and pesticide manufacturers to reduce pesticide risks;

In October of this year, EPA adopted a new policy to protect children from pollution by ensuring, for the first time, that children's health risks will be consistently and explicitly evaluated in all scientific and standard-setting activities.

The Clinton Administration has also taken many other actions that protect children and all Americans: we strengthened our enforcement of environmental laws and took action to reduce air pollution, reduce children's lead exposure, accelerate toxic waste cleanups, and expand the public's right-to-know about toxic chemicals in their neighborhoods.

But more remains to be done.

To continue our progress in reducing children's pesticide risks, we must continue to gather data, conduct basic research, carry out risk assessments on multiple exposures, take regulatory action, and educate the public.

And, we must continue our progress in reducing air pollution, water pollution, and exposure to lead and other toxic materials that endanger children's health.

President Clinton's budget reflects a strong and explicit commitment to protecting children's health.

The Republican budget threatens our ability to continue our

or protecting children from environmental hazards.

progress and meet the challenges of the future in protecting children's health in four ways:

The Republican budget cuts EPA funds for standard-setting by 17% as compared with the President's request.

The President's budget includes funding for specific actions to protect children: by setting new standards for pesticides in food, contaminants in drinking water, and dangerous air pollutants.

This includes a third year of funding -- \$2.3 million in FY 96 -- for standard-setting as part of the initiative on pesticides and children.

The Republican budget cuts science and technology funds by 22% compared to the President's budget.

These cuts could delay vital research on children's health, which would result in putting yet another generation of children at risk.

The President's budget for EPA makes children's health a priority, including:

\$5.5 million for EPA research as part of the initiative on children and pesticides, plus up to \$3 million for outside research on children and pesticides

\$8.4 million for research to support new drinking water standards and controls on microbial contaminants

\$25 million for research on ground-level ozone (smog) and \$7 million for research on tiny particles of air pollution, which cause respiratory illness to which children are particularly vulnerable

research on children and toxic urban air pollutants

\$5 million for research on endocrine disruptors that cause reproductive disorders

The Republican budget cuts environmental enforcement cut by 27%.

Their budget cuts "low priority" enforcement. Does that include the two children who died when

they crawled into a Dumpster where toxic waste had been dumped?

The Republican budget cuts by 45% funding to guard against drinking water contamination.

The President provided \$500 million in loan funds to help communities upgrade drinking water facilities to guard against microbial threats and other contamination.

The Republican budget cuts funding that would help communities keep raw sewage out of rivers and beaches.

Their budget cuts funds for communities by 30% -- a special threat for children whose drinking water comes from polluted rivers, lakes; and a threat to children who swim, boat, and fish.

Protecting our children is fundamental. We must not allow the Republican assault on public health and our environment to place our children at risk.

President Clinton's plan balances the budget without sacrificing the health of our children.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF SPEECHWRITING

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FROM: Terry Edmond

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NUMBER OF PAGES (INCLUDING COVER SHEET): 4

COMMENTS: This draft will change.
Let's talk over the weekend.

Thanks,
Terry

WARNING

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

December 15, 1995

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The Briefing Room

5:39 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: As all of you know, today the Republicans in Congress broke off our negotiations on how best to balance the budget in seven years. They said they would not even continue to talk unless we agreed right now to make deep and unconscionable cuts in Medicare and Medicaid. That's unacceptable. The cuts they propose would deprive millions of people of health care -- poor children, pregnant women, the disabled, seniors in nursing homes. They would let Medicare "wither on the vine" into a second-class system. And these things simply are not necessary to balance the budget.

You know, I don't agree with their very large tax cuts for wealthy Americans and for all the special interests that get help in their bill. But I did not require them to drop those provisions as a condition of just talking. But they wanted us to agree to big cuts in Medicare and Medicaid simply to talk.

Last week, before these talks even began, I forwarded to Congress a detailed plan to balance the budget in seven years without violating our values. That plan contained a large amount of deficit reduction over and above our original proposal. Today, we made yet another good-faith effort to resolve our differences. I have sought reasonable discussions and honest compromise to balance the budget.

Now the Republicans in Congress are not only refusing to talk; once again they're threatening to shut the government down if I do not accept their deep cuts in health care, education, the environment, and their tax increases on working families. I would not give into such a threat last month, and I will not give in today.

I would remind you when we signed the last resolution we said we would work in good faith to balance the budget in seven years without harmful cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, education, the environment, agriculture, veterans benefits, and without raising taxes on working families.

So let me say again, and all Americans must understand this

-- the decision by the Republican congressional majority to shut the government down has nothing -- nothing -- to do with the discussion over the seven-year balanced budget plan. Congress has simply refused to pass this year's budgets and has forced the government to operate on a series of temporary approvals so that they can use the threat of a shutdown to pressure me and the congressional Democrats into approving long-term reductions in Medicare, Medicaid, education and the environment that we believe strongly are not good for America.

It is wrong, it is simply wrong, for the congressional Republicans to insist that I make deep cuts in Medicare and Medicaid, or they will not even talk, and, furthermore, they will shut the government down again just before Christmas.

The Congress should simply pass straightforward legislation to keep the government open. And then our negotiators should return to the table without threats, without ultimatums, to discuss how we can find common ground on balancing the budget. That is what we ought to do. That is what I am willing to do. And the idea that we should abandon the commitment we made and they agreed to just a few days ago in not having unacceptable cuts in Medicare and Medicaid as a condition of talking is wrong -- is wrong -- and we should not do that.

Thank you very much.

END

5:43 P.M. EST

THOMAS JEFFERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Lawrence (Larry) Grove, Principal

Mimi Carter, Assistant Principal

125 South Old Glebe Road

Arlington, VA 22204

703-358-5900

703-979-3744 (f)

Thomas Jefferson Middle School is well known as a high quality school with excellent educational opportunities. Education Secretary Riley delivered his second annual state of education speech there last February. The school has 865 students, including 240 in the sixth grade. The school opened in 1972. The student body is quite diverse: 38% Hispanic, 26% black, 25% white, and 11% Asian.

All the sixth grade students take the same science class, from either Patricia Hymel or Leila Tahmosebi. One of these teachers will accompany the students. In their science classes, the students have learned about the effects of pollution on the environment and public health. They have studied the water quality of streams in the area. In addition to the Science classes, the school has a "Builders' Club," which is an afterschool environmental club. Some of the students at this event are members of the Builders' Club. The club runs the school's recycling program, plants shrubs around the school grounds, and has been involved in other community environmental work.

[On Saturday the Assistant Principal will forward additional information about the school, the science curriculum, and the Builders' Club, along with the information needed for the students.]

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ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Over the past twenty-five years, environmental education has become an essential component to teaching children of all ages about the importance of public health and environmental protection. Nearly every state in the country has an environmental education program in some form. These programs teach students to become aware and appreciate their environment by introducing them to ecological concepts and current environmental issues. Many programs infuse environmental education into most or all subject areas and grade levels, to teach children that everything we do affects our environment. Further, environmental education is also growing at the college and post-graduate level. University educators are working to build environmental education into a variety of college courses, and twenty-five business schools have teamed up to teach future managers how to incorporate environmental protection into their day-to-day decisions. Environmental education will continue to deepen environmental understanding throughout the country and will enable millions of Americans to participate in protecting the environment and public health of their communities.



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

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Terry Edmonds

456-5709

FROM:

Melissa Benney

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REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT ON THREATS TO CHILDREN'S HEALTH FROM ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

I. Children Are Particularly Vulnerable to Environmental Health Risks

When it comes to their health and development, children are not just little adults. The National Academy of Sciences has pointed out on more than one occasion that this also holds true when it comes to exposure to environmental pollutants. Children are particularly at risk from environmental hazards in three ways:

First, children are still growing and developing. They move through several stages of rapid growth and development, from infancy through adolescence. Exposure to toxic substances can affect their growth, impair development of their nervous systems, and cause abnormal development because of hormonal or immunologic effects. Infants' immune systems are less well developed, so they are less able than healthy adults to fight off emerging microbial threats such as cryptosporidium in drinking water.

Second, children are more exposed to environmental hazards than adults. They eat more calories, drink more water and breathe more air for their body weight than adults do, and thus may ingest more pollutants per pound of body weight. They eat different foods -- particularly fresh produce -- and larger amounts for their body weight than adults. Their immature skin and body tissues more easily absorb many harmful substances.

Third, young children's behavior exposes them to different environmental hazards. Their natural curiosity and tendency to explore leaves them open to health risks adults can more easily avoid. When young children crawl on the ground or the floor, or mouth toys and other objects, they are more exposed to dust and soil; lead paint; household chemicals; garden chemicals; and other potentially hazardous substances.

Although we know that keeping children healthy means healthier adults in the long run, we lack adequate research on children's environmental health issues, so that most current protections are based on data from adults. EPA's new policy to explicitly consider children's health risks in all Agency assessments of environmental hazards is expected to give rise to more scientific research on child-specific susceptibility and exposure to environmental pollutants of all types, and is designed to base the Agency's health-protective decisions on the best scientific research possible.

Despite the many unanswered questions remain about precisely how environmental hazards affect children's health, the amassing evidence suggests that children's health is increasingly at risk from pollution and other environmental problems. For example:

- **Asthma** -- both individual episodes and asthma-related deaths -- is on the rise in children and young people, increasing by a dramatic 42% between 1980 and 1987. Many of the six most common air pollutants, such as smog and sulfur dioxide, can cause or contribute to respiratory illnesses, including asthma. Two in five Americans live in an area where the air is unhealthy to breathe.

- **Lead poisoning** remains widespread at low levels among American children, affecting as many as 3 million children under the age of six. Even at low levels, lead poisoning in children causes IQ deficiencies, reading and learning disabilities, impaired hearing, reduced attention spans, hyperactivity and behavior problems. Seventy-four percent of all housing nationwide -- typically, older housing in which lead-based paint was used -- is contaminated with about 3 million tons of lead. Even though lead-based paint has long since been taken off the market, in those older homes, children are threatened by chipping or peeling lead paint, or excessive amounts of lead-contaminated dust.
- ① ✓ • **Pesticides** pose a risk for children both as a household chemical and in food, particularly given the higher amounts of fresh produce children consume. In 1993, more than 1 billion pounds of pesticides were used in the U.S. Some pesticides can cause cancer, central nervous system damage, respiratory illness, and other disorders. Each year, more than 100,000 children are involved in common household pesticide-related poisonings, and tens of thousands of children accidentally ingest pesticides. EPA receives an average of 24,000 pesticide hotline calls each year, two-thirds of which are calls from parents concerned about dietary or household risks of pesticides for their children.
- ② ✓ • **Drinking water** contaminants pose a risk particularly to infants, who drink more fluids per pound of body weight -- and whose immature immune systems cannot effectively fight off microbial contaminants like cryptosporidium. Last year, a total of 30 million Americans drank water from systems that violated one or more public health standards -- and roughly 13 million of them are served by systems that don't protect against microbial contaminants.
- ✓ • **Polluted waters** not only affect children who swim, but those that eat fish. All over America, signs are posted near thousands of rivers, lakes and streams warning that children and other sensitive groups should not eat fish caught in the water because of contamination. From January to September 1994, some 1,500 such advisories had been posted -- with 73 percent of them related to mercury contamination in the fish. Hundreds of beaches are closed each summer due to raw sewage discharges and other contamination.
- ③ ✓ • **Toxic waste:** Mothers shouldn't have to worry that their children may climb over a fence and be exposed to toxic waste, yet one in four Americans lives within four miles of a toxic waste dump. Last year in Florida, two children died because they inhaled a toxic chemical carelessly dumped near an open lot where they were playing.
- **Cancer-causing PCBs**, or polychlorinated biphenyls, were banned by EPA in 1976; some 20 years later, however, this toxic chemical continues to persist in the environment, often in contaminated fish. Children whose mothers are exposed to PCBs when pregnant may experience memory loss.

We as a nation should be very concerned about children's health, due to environmental hazards.

SCHOOLS TO CHOOSE FROM FOR DECEMBER 18 EVENT

Piney Branch Elementary School, Takoma Park, MD

The school participates in the Vice President's GLOBE program. The school could send 15 fifth graders, representing a very good ethnic and economic diversity. A science magnet teacher teaches about environmental issues, and she would accompany the students. The students conduct numerous environmental experiments and share the information with scientists. Note: Carol Browner's son attends this school, but he would not be a part of the event.

Jamestown Elementary School, Arlington, VA

The school participates in the Vice President's GLOBE program (and in fact was part of a GLOBE event with the VP). The school is not all that diverse. The fifth grade teacher, Maureen Herman, has devoted a good deal of time to environmental and health issues. Environmental and health issues are a priority in the curriculum. The students monitor environmental data and share it with scientists on the World Wide Web.

Ross Elementary School, Washington, DC (Dupont Circle)

The school participates in the Vice President's GLOBE program. The school has made environmental education a focus; the students are involved in hands on environmental measurement activities on a daily basis, observing temperature, water quality, plant life, and health experiments. They share this data with scientists on the World Wide Web. The school is not very culturally diverse. The teacher's name is Gladys Bauder.

Flint Hill Elementary
Vienna, Virginia

Flint Hill Elementary has successfully intertwined the importance of environmental and public health protection into every aspect of the school's curriculum -- from learning the effects of pollution in science class to realizing in social studies that protecting their environment is part of serving your community. For instance, through science class, 5th and 6th graders learn that the pollution in Vienna affects what happens down stream to the life and quality of water in both the Chesapeake Bay and the Potomac River. Their classroom study involves some hands-on activity -- including cleaning up the Potomac and taking a field trip to the Chesapeake to test the water for pollution, and learn the effects of pollution on the Bay life. Overall, students of all ages learn that preventing pollution is not only good to protect their environment and their own health, but that its the right thing to do.

Hunters Wood Elementary
Reston, Virginia

Hunters Wood Elementary, an Arts and Science Magnet School in Fairfax County, teaches their sixth graders that environmental protection is part of every day life. Linda Hamilton, the school's science teacher, provides the children with hands-on experiments to show them that a clean and safe environment is dependent upon everyone taking action to both prevent pollution, and clean it up. For instance, this year, Ms. Hamilton's 6th grade class studied nearby ponds to determine what the water consists of. They learned that the pond water was not drinkable, due to high levels of runoff pollution from surrounding communities. Ms. Hamilton taught the children the threat to their health if they drank the water -- including dysentery and other bacteria infections. She also taught them that ponds don't need to be polluted, and that someday, with their help, every pond might be safe to drink.