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6/20/96 4:00pm

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
RADIO ADDRESS TO THE NATION
JUNE 22, 1996 (TAPED JUNE 21, 1996)**

Good morning. Today I want to talk about keeping our families safe and secure, and especially about how we can help parents protect their children.

Since I took office, we have worked to combat the crime and violence that has become too familiar to too many Americans. We passed a sweeping Crime Bill in 1994 against steep opposition from partisan politicians and special interest pressure groups. We're putting 100,000 new police officers on America's streets in community policing; nearly half are already funded. We banned deadly assault weapons. The Brady Bill has stopped over 60,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers from buying a gun. We're helping communities give children something to say yes to, so they stay away from crime and trouble in the first place.

These laws are making a difference across our country. We have finally begun to push crime back. In city after city and town after town, crime rates are finally coming down. But we have a long way to go. And as we move forward, we have to remember that we're not just fighting against crime -- we're fighting for something. We're fighting for peace of mind; for the freedom to walk around the block at night and feel safe; for the security of neighborhoods that aren't plagued by drugs, and to restore the sense of community people my age grew up with. But most of all, we're fighting for our children; we're fighting for their future.

Nothing we do could ever be more important than keeping our children safe. And my Administration has taken decisive steps to help families protect their children -- especially from the dangerous criminals who have made a dark habit of preying on them. Study after study shows that sex offenders commit crime after crime. That's why, in the Crime Bill, we required every state in the country to compile a registry of sex offenders, and gave states the power to notify communities about child sex offenders and violent sex offenders that move into their neighborhoods.

But that wasn't enough. So last month, I signed Megan's Law -- to insist that states tell a community whenever a dangerous sexual predator enters its midst. Too many children have paid a terrible price because their parents didn't know about the dangers hidden in their own neighborhood. Megan's Law -- named after a seven year old girl taken so wrongly at the beginning of her life -- will help prevent these terrible crimes.

create Today, I am directing the Attorney General to report back in 60 days with a plan to make a National Registry so we can track sexual offenders and child molesters across the country. Megan's Law gives parents information they need to protect their children. I am acting today to make sure police officers can get the information they need to track sexual offenders down and bring them to justice when they commit new crimes. We have to make sure that every bit of information we have about the people who commit these horrible crimes is available to law enforcement wherever and whenever they need it.

The Crime Bill laid the foundation for this National Registry by requiring states to track sexual offenders within their borders. Megan's Law makes sure that parents get this information so they can take steps to watch out for their kids. Now I want the Attorney General to work with the states, link this information together, and make it available to law enforcement at every level. Police officers will be able to prevent more crimes and catch more criminals if they can share and compare the latest information we have.

We respect people's rights. But there is no right greater than a parent's right to raise a child in safety and in love. If you dare to prey on America's children, the law will follow you wherever you go, state to state and town to town. And that's the way it should be.

We will never be able to eliminate crime completely. But as long as crime is so commonplace we don't even look up when horror after horror leads the evening news, we know we have a long way to go. I want America to be a place where people who see a report of a serious crime are shocked -- not numb. I know we can make that America real. If we work together, if we put our children first, we surely can.

Thanks for listening.

Nothing we do could ever be more important than keeping our children safe. And my Administration has taken decisive steps to help families protect their children -- especially from the dangerous criminals who have made a dark habit of preying on them. Study after study shows that sex offenders are likely to commit these crimes again and again. And we have all read too many tragic stories about young people victimized by repeat offenders. That's why, in the Crime Bill, we required every state in the country to compile a registry of sex offenders, and gave states the power to notify communities about child sex offenders and violent sex offenders that move into their neighborhoods.

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Today, I am directing the Attorney General to report back in 60 days with a plan to develop a National Registry so we can track sexual offenders and child molesters across the country. Megan's Law gives parents information they need to protect their children. I am acting today to make sure police officers can get the information they need to track sexual offenders down and bring them to justice when they commit new crimes. We have to make sure that every bit of information we have about the people who commit these horrible crimes is available to law enforcement wherever and whenever they need it.

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