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TO: Ann O'LearyFAX: 6-2878 PHONE: _____DATE: 6/9 TIME: 2:15PAGES (INCLUDING COVER): 4

FROM: Ben Swift

COMMENTS:

Here is the accomplishments sheet
I have. Let me know if there is a
more recent draft. Also, can you take
a look at the Orphan Foundation's
release? I think the paragraph about
HRC's accomplishments is too vague.
I would love to give them examples of
specific initiatives HRC has worked on.
Which do you think we should highlight?

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS ON FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION

Under the strong leadership of President and Mrs. Clinton, the Clinton Administration has compiled a strong record of promoting the well-being of children and providing them permanent, loving homes. In 1998 there were a record 36,000 adoptions from foster care, the first significant increase in the history of the program. From 1996 to 1998, the number of adoptions nationwide rose 29 percent -- from 28,000 to 36,000 -- and is on a pace to meet the President's goal of 56,000 adoptions in 2002. Among the President's other steps to improve child welfare and encourage adoption:

Enacting the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999. The President signed this landmark bill, based largely on the Administration's FY 2000 budget request, to ensure that young people who leave foster care get the tools they need to make the most of their lives. It empowers those leaving foster care by authorizing \$700 million over five years to provide them better educational opportunities, access to health care, training, housing assistance, counseling and other services.

Enacting the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997. Based on the Administration's Adoption 2002 report, this landmark law made the health and safety of children a clear priority, provided the first-ever financial incentives for states to increase adoptions, tightened the time frames for making permanent placements of children, and removed other barriers to adoption.

Making Adoption Affordable. In 1996, President Clinton enacted a \$5,000 tax credit for families adopting children, and a \$6,000 tax credit for families adopting children with special needs. In the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, the President provided more support for families who adopt with a \$500 per-child tax credit. And under the Family and Medical Leave Act, parents can take time with a newly adopted child without losing their jobs or health insurance.

Breaking Down Racial and Ethnic Barriers to Adoption. New inter-ethnic adoption provisions signed into law by the President ensure that the adoption process is free from discrimination and delays on the basis of race, culture and ethnicity.

Giving States Flexibility and Support. The Clinton Administration has given 25 states waivers to test innovative strategies for improving state child welfare systems. The Administration has provided states technical support to improve court operations and grants to support local adoption projects, and has also secured federal funding for the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program to serve at-risk children and families.

Using the Internet to Promote Adoption. In November 1998, the President issued a directive to the Department of Health and Human Services to expand the use of the Internet as a tool to find homes for children waiting to be adopted from foster care. HHS will develop a national Internet site by the year 2002.

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file: adoption
foster care

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**HILLARY CLINTON AND TOM DELAY SHARE ORPHAN FOUNDATION OF
AMERICA'S 2000 HUMANITARIAN AWARD**
***OLIVER Dinner Highlights Accomplishments and Challenges of Twelve Former Foster Kids
Who Have Aged Out of System, Gone on to Higher Education***

WASHINGTON, D.C. – First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and House Majority Whip Tom DeLay were honored for their work on behalf of foster children at the Orphan Foundation of America's (OFA) annual OLIVER Awards Dinner on June 12. "Our choice of honorees reflects OFA's belief that the needs of foster kids transcend political differences," explains Eileen McCaffrey, OFA Executive Director. "Mrs. Clinton and Mr. DeLay viscerally understand that teens transitioning from state care to independence need quality programs that teach life skills such as goal-setting and time and money management, and provide ongoing, family-like guidance. The future of young people aging out of foster care is brighter thanks to the tireless work of Mr. DeLay and Mrs. Clinton."

Congressman DeLay has been a major player in improving the lives of children in foster care. He co-sponsored the Foster Care Reform Act of 1999, and was instrumental in pushing the bill through the House and Senate. President Clinton signed the bill into law last year. By extending benefits and increasing provisions for adolescents aging out of foster care, this legislation aids the 20,000 adolescents each year who are left without a home, medical care, skills or financial independence when they are "emancipated" out of the foster care system at age 18 or upon graduating from high school. Mr. DeLay and his wife have been foster parents to three adolescents over the past five years.

Under the strong leadership of President and Mrs. Clinton, the Clinton Administration has compiled a strong record of promoting the well-being of children and providing them with permanent, loving homes. In 1998, there were a record 36,000 adoptions from foster care, the first significant increase in the history of the program. From 1996 to 1998, the number of adoptions nationwide rose 29 percent – from 28,000 to 36,000 – and is on a pace to meet the President's goal of 56,000 adoptions in 2002. Mrs. Clinton has been an outspoken advocate on behalf of all children and is the author of the best-selling book, It Takes a Village.

The OLIVER Awards Dinner was truly a bipartisan event, co-chaired by Virginia Congressmen Tom Davis (R) and James Moran (D). Emceeding the dinner was OFA Honorary Chairman J.C. Watts (R-OK). The 12 young people honored as participants in the 2000 OLIVER project were selected for their leadership and scholarship qualities. They spent the week prior to the dinner in Washington meeting with members of Congress and business leaders and participating in leadership training workshops. The former foster youth will receive \$7,500 OLIVER

scholarships to help defray the costs of their studies.

The 2000 OLIVER scholarship recipients are: Jackie-Lynn Baker, Missoula, MT; Arlene Goltz, Medford, OR; Curtis Mays, Pasadena, CA; Michael Olsen, Fairfax, VA; Lisa Piccolo, Levittown, NY; Marvla Robinson, Oakwood, OK; Joey Smallwood, Marion, KS; Teresita Tolbert, Parkesburg, PA; Jeff Wilcox, Pueblo, CO; Curtis Wilson, Melbourne, FL; Araceli Santander, Waxahachie, TX; and Sima Patel, Chicago, IL.

The OLIVER Dinner was sponsored by the Freddie Mac Foundation. Additional support was provided by the Mortgage Insurance Companies of America, Oracle, The Limited and many other companies including AT&T, American Bankers Association, United Parcel Service, General Dynamics, American Society of Association Executives, and EmediaMillWorks.

The Orphan Foundation of America was founded in 1981 by an unadopted orphan, and is the only national organization solely dedicated to helping older foster youth achieve successful adulthood. OFA's goal is to provide scholarships, teen leadership training, mentoring support, and independent living skills training to older foster youth so they can become productive, self-reliant adults. OFA's funding comes from the Combined Federal Campaign, donations from private citizens and the corporate community.

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